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# THE ROUND TABLE

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF  
THE POLITICS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

## CONTENTS

The Conference and the Empire: 321

1. 1887-1902
2. 1902-1911
3. 1911 and after

The Spirit of the Coronation

Colonial Neutrality

Egypt

British Politics:

*The Constitutional Crisis*

Canadian Affairs:

*Coronation and Conference*

*Mr. Borden in the West*

*Redistribution and Election*

*Canada and Foreign Policy*

Australian Affairs:

*Australia and the Empire*

*The Referenda*

*The Australian Navy*

*Universal Military Training*

South African Affairs:

*The Imperial Conference*

*The Option of Neutrality in War*

*Language and Education*

New Zealand Affairs:

*The Japanese in the Pacific*

*New Zealand Defences*

*New Zealand and the Imperial Conference*

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# THE CONFERENCE AND THE EMPIRE

I. 1887-1902.

**F**ORTY years ago the British Empire was regarded as a failure. Contemporary judgement, conscious of the difficulties and burdens of the day and of the doleful lessons of the past could see no future before it. Men pointed to the white settlements in Canada, Australia and South Africa, and recalled the fate of the earlier American colonies, and the story of the Greek colonies in the Mediterranean. As Seeley said, 'We had not learnt from experience wisdom, but only despair.' History, indeed, seemed to prove that human beings failed of the capacity to rise above a certain territorial nationalism. In Turgot's phrase, colonies had always been 'like ripe fruits which cling till they ripen.' Was it not the manifest destiny of the British colonies also to declare their independence so soon as they could stand alone? Gladstone, indeed, went so far as to suggest that we should anticipate the inevitable end and settle the difficulties between England and America over the Civil War by an immediate transfer to America of British territory in Canada.

There was much the same feeling about the dependencies. India and the West Indies were England's chief possessions—an empire she had gained by no deliberate policy, but which had been forced upon her in her struggles with France and Spain, and by the restless enterprise of traders and adventurers. Her own political traditions—especially as embodied in the phrase 'no taxation without representation'—compelled her to abandon the methods of earlier empires and refrain from levying tribute from subject peoples. There was, therefore, no great enthusiasm for the dependencies. The trade with them was considerable, but it affected only a small portion of the British population, while the burdens for their defence all had to bear. The Indian mutiny in 1857, the Jamaica rebellion of 1865, the endless

## THE ROUND TABLE

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intervention in European politics in order to keep open the route to the East through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal, and the consequent expenditure on naval and military armaments, all combined to make people question the value of the dependent Empire, and to wonder whether the future they anticipated for the white colonies should be meted out also to the dependencies. In fact, to use a phrase of Mr Asquith's, the Empire was 'regarded as a regrettable necessity, to be apologised for as half blunder, half crime'

In the Colonies themselves there was complete indifference to the subject. People were absorbed in the task of settling and developing a virgin country, and in casting off the thralldom of a somewhat ignorant, narrow, and unsympathetic office in Downing Street, Whitehall. They had little knowledge of world problems beyond their borders, they had but little national consciousness of their own, and were content to let events shape their destiny. There was much cherishing of the traditions of the motherland, but beyond an indignant repudiation of disloyalty, colonials of that day had few ideas as to what their future relations to the Empire were to be.

The events of the past three months, notably the Coronation and the Imperial Conference, show how fundamentally opinion about the British Empire has changed. The change of course has been gradual, and in order to appreciate the real meaning of the Conference which has just closed, it is necessary to trace as briefly as possible the work of its predecessors.

The first Colonial Conference, held in 1887, marks the first stage in the development of a conception of the Empire totally different from the pessimism of the mid-Victorian days. This growth was caused mainly by the profound change which came over the international situation. From the close of the Napoleonic wars to the early 'seventies, there had been an almost complete lull in international politics beyond the confines of Europe, a lull which was in striking contrast to the world-wide struggles for colonial



## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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empire of the preceding two centuries. Europe had been absorbed in adjusting its ideas and its frontiers to the doctrines of the French revolution and the upheaval of the Napoleonic wars, and England almost alone of the great powers had showed its flag in the outer oceans of the globe. The era of European expansion seemed to have definitely passed away.

But with the entry of the last quarter of the century the expansion of Europe recommenced once more. Russia began her steady advance towards Afghanistan and the Far East. At the same time she did not relax her efforts to make herself a Mediterranean power by occupying Constantinople. These movements had caused anxiety for some time past to those who were responsible for the safety of India and the approaches thereto. But the Afghan wars, the dramatic despatch of a British squadron to the Dardanelles to warn Russia off Constantinople after her defeat of Turkey, and Disraeli's success at the 'peace with honour' conference which followed at Berlin in 1876, awoke the mass of the people abruptly to the change in the situation. Then the other powers followed the lead of Russia, and the scramble for Africa and the East began. Germany appropriated South-West Africa in 1884, and part of New Guinea a few months later. France began to extend her influence in the North of Africa. Russia, as the outcome of the Pendjeh incident, began a fresh move on Afghanistan. A conference in Berlin in 1885 agreed upon the first partition of African territory.

England to protect her existing possessions found herself forced to take part in the race. To begin with she showed some reluctance. And after the occupation of Egypt in 1882 an attempt was made to limit the increase of Imperial responsibilities. But the issue of the Gladstonian policy in South and North Africa—Majuba and the death of Gordon at Khartoum—brought the 'little England' policy into disfavour, and the size of the Empire was largely increased during this time.

Speakers and writers had not failed to bring home to

## THE ROUND TABLE

people, both in the United Kingdom and the Dominions, the significance of these events. Disraeli—the first of the Victorian statesmen to see into the future—pictured vividly to his countrymen the great part they might play in moulding the destinies of the world. Gladstone by his rhetoric about the Armenian atrocities and the ‘unspeakable’ Turk taught them what British rule meant for the teeming millions of India. Seeley, in his *Expansion of England*, published in 1883, two years after Majuba, emphasized once more the immense responsibilities of England in India, and pointed out how the development of the system of colonial self government afforded a code of relations between a mother country and her daughter states which would obviate both the evils of secession and the perils of central control. The new enthusiasm was crystallized in the sweeping and ill-considered proposals of the Imperial Federation League.

It was in these circumstances that the 1887\* Colonial Conference met. The occasion was the thanksgiving gathering for the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. The British Government in the Queen’s speech at the prorogation of Parliament had expressed ‘the conviction that there is on all sides a growing desire to draw closer in every practicable way the bonds which unite the various portions of the Empire,’ and they accordingly suggested an informal conference at which they might meet colonial representatives, official and otherwise, ‘in joint deliberation’ to consider ‘matters of common interest.’ In their invitation to the Colonial governments the British Government expressly deprecated the discussion of ‘what is known as Political Federation’ and, as was natural in view of recent international events, considered that ‘the question which is at

\* NOTE.—Mr Richard Jebb’s recent book, *The Imperial Conference* (Longmans and Co. 25s.), a sequel in many ways to his *Colonial Nationalism*, contains a very full and painstaking account of the history of the Conference up to 1907. The book is avowedly written from a “Tariff Reform” standpoint and its value as an impartial history is impaired by the strongly partisan views of the author.

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

once urgent and capable of useful consideration is that of organization for military defence.'

The invitation was everywhere accepted. Recent events had awakened opinion in the Colonies as in England to the fact that the old days when they could live in glorious isolation, oblivious of external affairs, were passing away. Canada had federated in 1867, largely through fear of American hostility; and Riel's rebellion, the immense unoccupied gap between its Eastern and Western settlements and the aggressive attitude of the United States made her much more apprehensive of external danger than she is to-day. Australia still consisted of five separate colonies, but had been so greatly alarmed by the annexation of certain Pacific Islands by France and Germany that she had created in 1883 the so-called federal council of Australasia, charged with the duty of advising the several governments on the external affairs common to all. The annexation of South-West Africa by Germany, and Rhodes's steady preaching of the necessity of incorporating the Northern territories before they were seized by other powers, had rendered the South African representatives fully alive to the importance of external affairs.

The importance of the first Conference lies rather in the definition it gives of the prevailing ideas about the relations which should subsist between the mother country and the colonies, than in its practical achievements. On all sides there was a general wish to promote the 'unity' or 'solidarity,' or 'strength' of the Empire. But there was no general belief that the existing views about the organization of the Empire required alteration. These views were quite clear. It was England's business to run the Empire as a whole, to conduct its foreign relations, to defend it from attack, to govern the dependencies. Colonial legislatures were responsible for the government of their own territories, but had no responsibility for defending them from invasion from across the seas, or for assisting in the defence of the Empire as a whole. Accordingly, at the Conference there was no discussion of foreign policy.

## THE ROUND TABLE

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India was neither represented nor mentioned. Even the debates on defence took no account of the disposition of the main British army and navy.

As suggested in the invitation, projects of federation were ruled out by universal consent. For, as Lord Salisbury explained in his opening address, 'we must reconcile ourselves to conducting our own affairs, so far as domestic matters go, each in his own locality.' He went on, therefore, to refer to what the British Government regarded as the most important matter before the Conference—Imperial defence. 'Our interests,' he said, 'are common,' and the efforts which defence requires should be co-ordinated so as to produce the maximum effect. He pointed out that the colonies were in danger not because of a foolish or aggressive Imperial policy, for the policy of the United Kingdom had long been and still was 'essentially pacific,' but because there had recently been a great growth in naval power in European countries; and though these countries might not be contemplating aggression, it was impossible to ignore the greatly increased 'facilities' for such action afforded by the development of steam and electric communication. He added that the British proposals for Imperial defence were no

'mere contrivance on our part to lighten our burden . . . . What we desire is that all parts of the Empire should be equally safe, equally prosperous, equally glorious; and for that end we desire that all should take their fair and legitimate part in a task of which all ought to be proud.'

The practical proposals of the British Government, however, were not so formidable as this address might suggest. The cost of the British navy was still to be entirely defrayed by the British taxpayer, who was also to pay for the defence of naval bases and coaling stations, except when such stations were 'an insurance of colonial property.' It was suggested that in such cases the self-governing colonies, like the

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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Crown colonies, should make some contribution towards the cost.

The discussion pointed unmistakably to the prevalence of the 'colonial idea.' The general principle that Great Britain should bear the whole cost of the navy was never questioned, and the discussion turned on what contribution, if any, the colonies should make towards the cost to the British taxpayer of defending their own territories. The Australian colonies wished for a larger squadron and more extensive harbour works in their own waters than the British Admiralty considered it could afford. Accordingly it was arranged that an auxiliary squadron should be stationed in Australian waters under Admiralty control, but not free to move out of territorial waters except with the consent of the colonial governments. To this squadron the Australian colonies agreed to contribute £126,000 a year—apparently about half its cost. It was in no sense a local navy. It was built, manned, and controlled by the Admiralty but, in return for the subsidy, the radius of its operations was confined to Australian waters.

Canada was unable to make any contribution. She quoted the promise of the British Government, made during the negotiations preceding confederation in 1867, to undertake the naval defence of the proposed Dominion provided Canada spent not less than £200,000 a year on her own land defence, and considered her obligations to the Empire discharged by the expenditure of this sum. Cape Colony pleaded the heavy cost of recent native wars, and explained that her financial condition precluded her from assuming any burden for naval defence at that time.

But the subject did not entirely end there. The Dominion representatives were anxious to do something to promote the 'strength' and 'unity' of the Empire. Sir Samuel Griffith of Australia advocated a commercial bond. He urged 'the recognition of the principle that his Majesty's subjects as such have a community of material interest as distinguished from the rest of the world,' and suggested that inter-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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Imperial trade should be fostered by the imposition of differential duties in favour of Imperial products. Mr Hofmeyr, from South Africa, made a more far-reaching proposal. He endorsed what Sir Samuel Griffith had said about the importance of commercial preference as a corrective of the 'disintegrating tendencies' of local territorial interests. But he could not consider the conclusions already reached about defence as 'satisfactory.' Except for the small Australian contribution to an auxiliary fleet the rest of the colonial Empire had done 'nothing at all' towards the maintenance of the Imperial navy. Yet colonial assistance to the British navy might be very necessary 'by and by' in view of the tremendous interests it had to protect, when compared with the French and German fleets, 'and having regard to the limited interests they had to protect.' He therefore suggested that the request of the Imperial Government for assistance in defence and the colonial suggestions for improving Imperial trade might be combined in a single scheme. He advocated 'promoting a closer union between the various parts of the British Empire by means of an Imperial Tariff of customs (two per cent) to be levied, independently of the duties payable under existing tariffs, on goods entering the Empire from abroad, the revenue derived from such tariff to be devoted to the general defence of the Empire.'

These proposals met with a very cordial reception from the colonial delegates. But the Conference was simply an informal gathering; it had no authority to bind any of the governments, no resolutions were passed, and the colonial view on Imperial relations was never precisely defined.

A second Conference, however, held in Ottawa in 1894, set down more definitely the colonial attitude towards the Imperial question. This Conference arose out of certain fruitless negotiations between Canada and the Australian colonies for reciprocity, and out of a resolution passed by the 1887 Conference in favour of a British cable across the Pacific. It was strictly a Colonial Conference, for it was summoned by the



## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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Canadian Government, whose Minister for Trade and Commerce presided; its business was confined to the discussion of commercial relations and intercommunications, the wider Imperial problems, such as defence and foreign affairs, not being raised at all; and Lord Jersey, the representative of the British Government, only held a watching brief. At the Conference there was general expression of a desire to promote the 'general consolidation' of the Empire, and the natural tendency of the colonies to favour the method of commercial consolidation gained more explicit expression. The general object of the Conference was defined by the Canadian minister at the outset as the diversion into British channels 'by a judicious adjustment of tariffs' of a large portion of the trade with foreign powers. With this purpose in view the Conference passed two sets of resolutions. The first recommended that the British Government, by legislation affecting the colonies and by denouncing the commercial treaties with Germany and Belgium, should enable the self-governing colonies to enter 'into agreements of commercial reciprocity with each other or with Great Britain.' The second stated that

'whereas the stability and progress of the British Empire can be best assured by drawing continually closer the bonds which unite the colonies and the mother country, . . . and whereas this co-operation and unity can in no way be more effectively promoted than by the cultivation and extension of the mutual and profitable interchange of their products, this Conference records its belief in the advisability of a customs arrangement between Great Britain and her colonies by which trade within the Empire may be placed on a more favourable footing than that which is carried on with foreign countries.'

The Conference also approved of inter-colonial preferences pending the realization of the complete scheme of Imperial reciprocity, of the project for the laying of a Pacific cable,

## THE ROUND TABLE

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and of the inauguration of a 'regular monthly steamship service between Vancouver and Sydney.'

Thus from the earliest days the relative attitudes of the mother country and the colonies in approaching the discussion of Imperial affairs, became defined. The Imperial Government, conscious of its immense responsibilities, regarded provision for defence as the most important 'common interest' of the self-governing Empire. The colonial governments, necessarily ignorant of international questions, and of the problems of the dependent Empire, and absorbed in the development of their own lands, thought that commercial reciprocity was the safest and the best method of strengthening and uniting the Empire. The reason for this difference in view is obvious. Combination for defence, as proposed in those days, involved the settlement of a basis of contribution for the different states, and the acceptance by the colonies of the policy of the mother country, both as regards foreign affairs and the expenditure of the common funds. Their representatives in London might have influenced, but they could not have controlled the action of what would have been at once the British and the Imperial Government. It was not surprising therefore, that, in the interests both of their pockets and their autonomy, the colonial representatives should have preferred measures, such as Preference, which were designed to strengthen the Empire, but which left the autonomy of the colonies unimpaired.

Before the next Conference took place—in 1897—events had given still further proof that the expansion of Europe, once recommenced, was going to lead to the partition of the world between the civilized powers. During the early 'nineties the process of dividing up Africa between the Great Powers was steadily pursued, and was productive of much friction, especially between England and France. It was the days of the great chartered companies which acquired Rhodesia, East Africa, and Nigeria, of the preparations for the re-conquest of the Sudan, of the expansion of

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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France over North Africa, and of the consolidation of German power in South-West and in East Africa. In this period the scramble for Asia also began, Russia was steadily pushing her Empire towards Manchuria and the China seas, and there was friction between England and France in the Malay Peninsula. The defeat of China by Japan awakened the world to the rise of a new power, while the joint veto by Russia, Germany and France on the lease of Port Arthur to Japan, was the prelude to the first attempt at the spoliation of China by the same powers in 1898. Then came the Jameson raid and the dramatic intervention of the Kaiser in South African affairs with the telegram to President Kruger. These events produced a great change in the British attitude towards colonial affairs, which was strikingly manifested by Mr Chamberlain's choice in 1895 of what had hitherto been regarded as a subordinate office—that of Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Diamond Jubilee afforded an opportunity of a further consultation between the British and the Colonial Governments on matters of common concern. Though, as Mr Chamberlain explained, the 1897 gathering was in no sense a 'formal conference,' and though it passed few resolutions of importance, it was the first conference which deserves the name of an Imperial Conference. For, though not officially so described, it was in fact the first conference between the governments of the Empire. Unofficial representatives were excluded and the membership was restricted to Prime Ministers who, by virtue of the command of a Parliamentary majority, were in a position to commit their countries to action of which they approved. It was, therefore, an infinitely more responsible gathering than any which had preceded it, because by reaching unanimity it could commit the Empire to any policy it endorsed. As was natural in these circumstances, its resolutions were characterized by far more caution than those of its less responsible predecessors.

Despite intervening events, the attitudes of the British

## THE ROUND TABLE

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and the Colonial Governments were much the same as they had been in 1887. The views of the British Government, as represented by Mr Chamberlain, were determined by the responsibility which lay upon it of governing the vast and still rapidly increasing number of subject peoples in the Empire, and of protecting, by its foreign policy and its preparations for defence, the Empire as a whole. Mr Chamberlain believed that there was a widespread desire in the colonies to 'share in the management of the Empire,' and 'to substitute for the slight relationship which at present exists a true partnership.' He also felt that there was a 'real necessity for some better means of consultation between the self-governing colonies and the mother country,' and he put forward as a 'personal suggestion' the creation of 'a great council of the Empire to which the colonies should send representative plenipotentiaries, not mere delegates,' who would be able 'to give really effective and valuable advice.' He recognized, however, that with the 'privilege of management and of control will also come the obligation and the responsibility,' and that 'federation' would be accomplished 'only after the lapse of a considerable time and only by gradual steps.'

Pending the creation of some 'great council' of the Empire, Mr Chamberlain regarded defence as the most important 'common interest' of the mother country and the colonies. The gigantic British fleet was maintained 'as a necessity of Empire,' for without the Empire 'our military and our naval resources would not require to be maintained at anything like their present level.' It was as essential to the safety of the colonies as of the United Kingdom, and 'nothing could be more suicidal or more fatal' than for any of them to 'separate themselves in the present stage from the protecting forces of the mother country.' He was anxious, therefore, to hear the views of the Premiers as to the 'contribution which they think the colonies would be willing to make in order to establish this principle' of 'mutual support.'

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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But the Colonial Premiers differed very widely from the Colonial Secretary. They saw no need for any Imperial council. They considered the 'present political relations' as 'generally satisfactory under the existing condition of things.' They stated explicitly that they were not anxious to share in the control or the burdens of the Empire, though they recognized that before very long a means would have to be devised for giving them 'a voice in the control and direction of those questions of Imperial interest in which they are concerned equally with the mother country.' They were, in fact, not prepared to accept 'a share in the direction of Imperial policy which would involve a proportionate contribution in aid of Imperial expenditure.' In these circumstances there was nothing to be done but to leave the existing arrangements for defence as they were. It was agreed that the United Kingdom should continue to bear the whole responsibility for the naval defence of the Empire, while the colonies were left to make provision for their own land defence. The duration of the agreement for the auxiliary Australian squadron was extended for a further term of years.

At the same time the colonial premiers recognized the great advantages of a mutual exchange of ideas, and recommended the holding of 'periodical conferences' for the discussion of matters of 'common interest.' They also again expressed their belief in commercial reciprocity as the best method of promoting the union of the Empire. Accordingly they passed a resolution asking the British Government to denounce the treaties with Belgium and Germany which impeded the grant of preference by the colonies to the United Kingdom, and undertook 'to confer with their colleagues' with a view to increasing the trade between the mother country and the colonies by means of 'a preference given by the colonies to the products of the United Kingdom.'\*

\*NOTE.—A few months earlier Canada had granted a preference from 12½ per cent to 25 per cent on British goods.

## THE ROUND TABLE

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During the ensuing years the Empire was absorbed first in the successful campaign which led to the re-conquest of the Sudan, and in the three years' struggle in South Africa. The despatch of the colonial contingents to a war in which the whole Empire was involved and their success in action produced a very marked change in public opinion. In the United Kingdom it strengthened the belief that the colonies were willing and anxious to share in the responsibilities and burdens of Empire, if only some means could be found of keeping the Imperial Government in London in touch with their views. In the colonies, on the other hand, it had produced a sense of national individuality which was not fully recognized in the United Kingdom till considerably later. The prevalent belief that untrained colonial troops had proved themselves incomparably superior in the field to the far-famed and highly trained British regular, evoked a conscious nationalism which repudiated indignantly the idea of 'tribute' in men or money to the Admiralty and War Office, and scoffed at the projects of the older Imperial Federation Leagues. But colonial nationalism had not reached its full development by the middle of 1902, when the coronation of King Edward afforded a new opportunity for consultation between the British Government and the colonial prime ministers. We find, therefore, at the Conference itself an attitude of mind which, in the case of the British Government, was practically the same as in 1897 and 1887, and in the case of the colonies, was midway between the 'colonialism' of 1887 and 1897 and the nationalism of 1907 and 1911.

Mr. Chamberlain opened the Conference by expressing the belief that 'the political federation of the Empire is within the limits of possibility,' and asking whether it was possible to 'make any advance' on the resolution of 1897, which declared existing political arrangements to be satisfactory. Commenting on a recent speech of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's, he said that if the colonies were willing to bear their share in the burdens of the Empire, the British



## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

Government were willing to 'make a proposal for giving a corresponding voice in the policy of the Empire.' 'We think,' he said, 'it is time that our children should assist us to support it (the burden of Empire), and whenever you make the request to us we will hasten gladly to call you to our councils.' Representation, he thought, might be given to the colonies 'in either or in both Houses of Parliament,' though he preferred the creation of a 'real council of the Empire to which all questions of Imperial interest might be referred.' He declared, however, that the British Government, while it would welcome any approach to a 'more definite and closer union,' felt that the demand, 'if it comes and when it comes, must come from the colonies.'

Mr Chamberlain, however, hoped that, whatever might be decided about the political organization of the Empire, 'something would be done to recognize more effectually than had hitherto been done the obligation of all to contribute to the common weal' in the matter of defence. He quoted the amount spent per head by the various peoples of the Empire on defence, and declared that no one could pretend that it was 'a fair distribution of the burdens of the Empire.' He thought it was inconsistent with the position of the colonies—'inconsistent with their dignity as nations—that they should leave the mother country to bear the whole, or almost the whole, of the expense.' Great Britain could not continue to bear the burden indefinitely, and he therefore considered it not unreasonable to call their 'serious attention to a state of affairs which cannot be permanent.' This attitude of mind was still further emphasized by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War. A memorandum from the Admiralty pointed out that the word defence was a misnomer in connexion with naval affairs, 'because the primary object of the British navy is not to defend anything, but to attack the fleets of the enemy, and by defeating them to afford protection to British Dominions, shipping and commerce.' Lord Selborne added that though the British taxpayer bore

## THE ROUND TABLE

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practically the whole burden of naval defence, 'not less than one-fourth' of the eleven or twelve millions of Empire trade was trade in which he 'had no interest either as buyer or seller. . . . It was either intercolonial trade, or trade between the British Dominions beyond the seas and foreign countries.' He also quoted the large expenditure on defence made by such countries as Holland, Japan and the Argentine as proving the immense gain which the colonies derived from being part of the Empire instead of separate nations. He concluded,

'I want to see from all parts of the Empire a personal contribution to the navy, so that there may not only be an abstract Admiralty to govern the navy, but an Admiralty that has won the confidence of the colonies, because the colonies understand its policy, and because in each colony there are officers and men belonging to the navy.'

Mr Brodrick, following up a suggestion from New Zealand, proposed the creation of a special body of troops in each of the colonies to be 'ear-marked for Imperial service.'

The reception accorded to these proposals by the Premiers varied. The idea of federation or of the creation of an Imperial council was unanimously rejected. But it was also unanimously agreed that 'it would be to the advantage of the Empire if Conferences were held as far as practicable at intervals not exceeding four years, at which questions of common interest affecting the relations of the mother country and His Majesty's Dominions across the seas could be discussed and considered as between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Prime Ministers of the self-governing colonies.' It was also resolved that the views of 'colonies affected' should be obtained during the negotiation of foreign treaties 'in order that they may be in a better position to give adhesion to such treaties.' As regards defence there was a divergence of opinion. Australia agreed to pay £200,000 and New Zealand £40,000

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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a year to an improved Australasian squadron. Cape Colony and Natal contributed £50,000 and £35,000 a year towards the general maintenance of the navy. Canada, on the other hand was 'contemplating the establishment of a local naval force in the waters of Canada,' and was unable to make any offer 'analogous' to the rest. In the case of the Imperial Army Reserve, Cape Colony, Natal and New Zealand 'were disposed to fall in' with Mr Brodrick's proposals, but Canada and Australia thought it best to raise the standards of the general body of their own forces. Apparently however, all the premiers agreed that

'to establish a special force, set apart for general Imperial service and practically under the absolute control of the Imperial Government, was objectionable in principle, as derogating from the powers of self-government enjoyed by them, and would be calculated to impede the general improvement in the training and organization of their defensive forces and, consequently, their ability to render effective help, if it should be required.'

Once again it was the colonial representatives who took the lead in promoting closer commercial relations. Mr Chamberlain devoted a considerable part of his opening address to this subject. He pointed out that the Empire might be self-sustaining, but that in point of fact the United Kingdom derived the greater part of its necessities from foreign countries, while the bulk of its exports were also to foreign countries. 'Our first object then . . . is free trade within the Empire' which would 'enormously increase our inter-imperial trade; would hasten the development of our colonies; would fill up the spare places in your land with an active, intelligent, and above all, British population; would make the mother country entirely independent of foreign food and raw material.' Mr Chamberlain, however, recognized that no so 'far-reaching' a proposal had yet been made by any of the colonies, though Canada had

## THE ROUND TABLE

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granted a  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent reduction of duties on British imports, and New Zealand advocated the general adoption of the principle of preference. He then proceeded to examine the effect of the 1897 Canadian preference. He thought the results had been 'altogether disappointing,' a result which he attributed to the fact that even the reduced duties were prohibitive. 'So long as a preferential tariff, even a munificent preference, is still sufficiently protective to exclude us altogether, or nearly so, from your markets, it is no satisfaction to us that you have imposed even greater disability upon the same goods if they come from foreign markets.'

The Prime Ministers, however, dissented from Mr Chamberlain's views. After considerable discussion they passed a resolution declaring that 'in the present circumstances of the colonies, it is not practicable to adopt a general system of Free Trade within the Empire, and that the principle of preferential trade . . . would stimulate and facilitate mutual commercial intercourse and would by promoting the development of the resources and industries of the several parts, strengthen the Empire.' Accordingly the Prime Ministers undertook to do their best to 'give substantial preferential treatment to the products and manufactures of the United Kingdom' and respectfully urged upon 'His Majesty's Government the expediency of granting in the United Kingdom preferential treatment to the products and manufactures of the colonies.'

### II. 1902-1911.

THE 1902 Conference marked the close of the second stage in the growth of opinion about the character and organization of the Empire. Succeeding the era when 'disintegration' was regarded as the inevitable future, came the period when the policy of centralizing the defensive resources of the whole Empire in the hands of Great Britain, held the field. As we have seen, this policy,

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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which was steadily advocated by the British Government, never gained more than a grudging assent from the colonies. They contributed reluctantly to Imperial services and advocated commercial reciprocity as a preferable method of strengthening the Empire.

The Conference of 1902 also marked the opening of the third period, when both the Imperial and the Colonial Governments pursued, in Mr Harcourt's words 'the path not of Imperial concentration but of Imperial co-operation.' Its history is curious. To begin with, there was a sudden abandonment of the policy of 'concentration' by those who had been its foremost advocates. The experience of the 1902 Conference and a visit to South Africa seem to have convinced Mr Chamberlain that rapid progress towards Imperial unity along the lines hitherto advocated by the British Government was out of the question, and that the most fruitful course was to follow the lead of the Colonial Prime Ministers, and begin by establishing a complete system of Imperial reciprocity. This, as Lord Salisbury had said in 1882, was not possible 'until on one side or the other very different notions with regard to fiscal policy prevail from those which prevail at the present moment.' So convinced, however, was Mr Chamberlain of the urgent necessity of consolidating the Empire by commercial means, that in 1903 he resigned his position in the Government in order the better to preach the new gospel of Tariff Reform. In the event he converted to his view the great majority of his own party and of those who were specially interested in Imperial affairs. In the Dominions, as the self-governing colonies now began to be named, the belief in commercial reciprocity as the best method of cementing the Empire, and as the only policy consistent with their own existence as free nations, was greatly strengthened by Mr Chamberlain's campaign.

Thus, by the time that the 1907 Conference assembled, the older advocates of Imperial Union for defence and

## THE ROUND TABLE

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foreign policy had become converts to the colonial idea of Imperial consolidation by commercial means. By an even more curious chapter of events, the Imperial Government, which might naturally have been expected to call the attention of the Conference to the problems of defence and foreign affairs, found themselves debarred from doing so. This was the more remarkable because the external situation had absorbed a great deal of attention during the intervening years, both in England and elsewhere. In 1902 the German Navy Bill and the popular agitation with which it was accompanied, had finally aroused the people of the United Kingdom to the new danger which was arising across the North Sea. In 1905 the complete defeat of Russia by Japan revolutionized the diplomatic arrangements of the world. It led to the new Anglo-Japanese alliance and to the removal of all British battle-ships from far Eastern waters. It awakened the Australasian people to a sudden comprehension of the Asiatic menace. It removed so completely the earlier dangers to India and to British communications with Australasia and the Far East, that within two years the old enmity between Russia and England had given way to an understanding which settled, at any rate for a time, the vexed and dangerous problems in Thibet, Afghanistan, and Persia. On the other hand, it left Germany unquestionably the first military power in Europe. The disappearance of any serious danger in the rear enabled Germany to put pressure on other European powers with practical impunity, and it was not long before her government tried to take advantage of this strong position. In 1904 an agreement was signed between France and England for the settlement of their long standing North African quarrel, on the basis that France was to recognize the prior rights of England in Egypt, and England the prior claims of France in Morocco. The German Government professed to regard this as a direct blow to her national prestige. It put forward the claim that as a first-class power, Germany had a right to be



## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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consulted about every international arrangement, and demanded under threat of war, the resignation of M. Delcassé and Lord Lansdowne, as a public proof that her rights were recognized. France felt powerless to avoid defeat, and M. Delcassé resigned. The British Government was strong enough to resist the German threats, and Lord Lansdowne ignored the German demand. For days Europe hovered on the brink of war, but finally Germany decided that the game was not worth the candle, and accepted a conference as a method of settling the questions involved without loss of prestige. After protracted sittings the Algeiras Conference made the settlement of Moroccan affairs, which has been so rudely disturbed of late by the French expedition to Fez, the Spanish occupation of Alcazar, and the dispatch of a German gunboat to Agadir.

In 1906, however, a new Government had come into power in England. The members of this Government had had little experience of office and had little knowledge of Imperial and foreign affairs. Accordingly they began conducting an experiment in foreign affairs which they believed would relieve the growing tension in international politics, and especially in the relations between England and Germany. They hoped that at the second Hague Conference, due in 1907, some practical steps might be taken in the direction of disarmament, and in order to give proof of the sincerity of their intentions, they greatly reduced the building programme and the expenditure of the British Navy in their first two years of office. Thus, on March 2, 1907, on the eve of both of the Imperial and the Hague Conferences, the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, published an article in the *Nation* in which he said, 'We have already given earnest proof of our sincerity by the considerable reductions that have been effected in our naval and military expenditure, as well as by the undertaking that we are prepared to go further if we find a similar disposition in other quarters.'

When, therefore, the British Cabinet met the representa-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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tives of the Dominions at the 1907 Conference, so far from wanting to press for an increase in the preparation for defence they were anxious to do nothing to impair their public declarations in favour of largely diminishing expenditure on armaments.

This practically eliminated all possibility of a discussion of the general problem of defence. It naturally also eliminated the earlier projects for Imperial federation, or the creation of a 'great Imperial council.' For assuming the success of the government's efforts for disarmament there would be nothing for a permanent Imperial body to do. On the other hand there was no great prospect of any important advance towards Imperial reciprocity in trade, for the British Ministry was absolutely committed to Free Trade, and was resolutely opposed to the Dominion policy of Imperial preference. It was evident that the Conference was unlikely to produce any striking results.

The Conference fulfilled these expectations. It was opened by an address from the Prime Minister. Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman struck the new note from the outset. 'I think,' he said, 'that the views sometimes taken of the proper relations of the colonies to the mother country, with respect to expenditure on armaments have been, of late, somewhat modified. We do not meet to-day you as claimants for money, although we cordially recognize the spirit in which contributions have been made in the past, and will, no doubt, be made in the future.' He declared that 'the essence of the British Imperial connexion' was 'freedom and independence'—'Freedom of action on the part of the individual State, freedom in their relations with each other and with the mother country.' But, he added, 'Freedom does not necessarily mean letting things drift,' and he suggested that 'provision should be made for maintaining the impetus' given by the Conference to the consideration and settlement of Imperial problems by arranging for the meeting of subsidiary conferences on matters 'which require more time and treatment in greater

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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detail than is possible in the Colonial Conference itself.'

The most important discussion centred on the constitution of the Conference itself. The abandonment of the earlier idea of centralization had produced a practical harmony between the views of the Imperial Government and the national aspirations of the Dominions. Mr Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary in the preceding Government, had proposed in 1905 that the Conference should be constituted as a permanent institution under the title of the 'Imperial Council,' and that its efficiency should be enhanced by the appointment of a 'permanent commission' of a 'purely consultative and advisory character' to prepare the agenda for the Conferences, and after careful preliminary examination, to present subjects for discussion 'in as concise and clear a form, and with as much material for forming a judgement as possible.' These proposals, though they were not again put forward by Lord Elgin, prepared the way for the extremely important resolution which, after long discussion, was finally passed. This resolution defined with great precision the organization and functions of the body which in future was to be the highest deliberative assembly within the Empire. The Conference itself was to be known as the Imperial as opposed to the Colonial Conference. It was to meet once in four years. Instead of its being a gathering at which matters were to be discussed between the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Premiers, it was to be a Conference at which 'questions of common interest' were to be considered 'as between His Majesty's Government and His Governments of the self-governing Dominions beyond the seas.' The Secretary of State for the Colonies was to be entrusted with the work of making the arrangements for the Conference, and of controlling a Secretariat whose duty it would be to obtain information for the use of the Conference, attend to its resolutions, and conduct correspondence relating to its affairs. Where matters of impor-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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tance or requiring detailed examination arose for discussion in the intervals between the meetings of the Conferences, subsidiary conferences were to be specially appointed to deal with them.

This resolution established the status of the Dominions as national entities entirely distinct from that which inhabited the British Isles. It recognized that the basis of Imperial organization was the co-operation of five nations, not the centralization of power in the hands of the British, acting as the Imperial Government. It finally destroyed the older conception of imperial development as a gradual reunion of the colonies with the mother country through representation in either of the British Houses of Parliament.

When the Conference came to defence there was considerable confusion of thought. The efforts which were being made by the Imperial Government in favour of disarmament prevented the Dominions from entering upon a serious discussion of how the new principle of co-operation was to be applied to defence and foreign policy. The Admiralty on the other hand made little attempt to apply this principle to naval defence. Lord Tweedmouth, as its representative, stated that if, as he understood was the case, some of the Dominions wanted to start 'some naval service' of their own, the Admiralty was prepared to consider a modification of the existing arrangements to meet the views of the colonies, provided 'unity of command and direction of the fleet' was maintained. He declared that though the British Government did not come to the Dominions 'as beggars,' he was glad that the Dominions should take 'some leading part' in the naval defence of the Empire, 'the only reservation the Admiralty desire to make is that they claim to have the charge of the strategical questions which are necessarily involved in naval defence, to hold command of the naval forces of the country, to arrange the distribution of ships in the best possible manner, to resist attacks, and to

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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defend the Empire at large, whether it be our own islands or the dominions beyond the seas.'

It was not unnatural that in such circumstances the Conference came to no decisions at all about naval defence, Mr Deakin declared that the Commonwealth disliked the existing system of paying part of the cost of a squadron which the Admiralty controlled, and would prefer 'to devote our funds to the provision of a local force' which should be 'associated in the closest possible manner with the Navy.' Mr Brodeur said that in Canada there was 'only one mind' on the question, and that was against subsidies. New Zealand was prepared to trust the Admiralty and continue its contribution. The South African colonies were divided, and were clearly not in a position to do anything effective pending Union. In the end the existing arrangements were left entirely unaltered.

When the question of military defence came up greater progress was made, for the War Office accepted the principle of co-operation from the outset. Mr Haldane explained that the system of defence for the Empire comprised three lines. In the first place, there was a fleet 'stronger than the fleet of any other power, or for that matter of any other two powers.' Such a fleet was necessary 'if the Empire is to hold together at all.' In the second place there was an expeditionary force 'which exists not for local defence, but for the service of the Empire as a whole,' and which was available to proceed to defend the frontiers of any portion of the Empire at a moment's notice. In the third place, there were the 'home defence troops' enrolled only for service at home. His main purpose in attending the Conference was to 'emphasize the desirability' of organizing this third line of home defence forces throughout the Empire on common lines, in order that they might be in a better position to render 'mutual assistance' in time of war. And in order to achieve this end, he recommended a scheme for the creation of an Imperial General Staff. Such a staff, while purely advisory and

## THE ROUND TABLE

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having no control over the troops either of the United Kingdom or of any of the Dominions, would produce uniformity in the organization and equipment of the military forces throughout the Empire, and would be able to furnish to the local governments or local commander-in-chief 'whether he were Canadian, British or Australian, or New Zealander or South African,' advice and information 'based upon the highest military study of the time.'

This proposal was a very different one from Mr Brodric's request for the 'earmarking' of colonial troops for the expeditionary army, and was favourably received. The Conference passed a resolution to the effect that it 'welcomes and cordially approves the exposition of general principles embodied in the statement of the Secretary of State for War and without wishing to commit any of the governments represented, recognizes and affirms the need of developing for the service of the Empire a general staff, selected from the forces of the Empire as a whole.' There was also some discussion as to whether the Dominions should undertake to send contingents to the expeditionary army for service outside their own territories in time of war, but the consensus of opinion was strongly against the idea.

As the natural outcome of the wish of the larger Dominions to control their own arrangements both for naval and military defence, a resolution was also passed authorizing them to refer to the Committee of Imperial Defence 'for advice on any local questions in regard to which expert advice is deemed desirable' and declaring that 'whenever so desired a representative of the colony which may wish for advice should be summoned to attend, as a member of the Committee during the discussion of the question raised.'

When the Conference came to discuss commercial relations a serious cleavage of opinion showed itself. Mr Deakin defined the position of the majority of the Dominions at the outset by moving a resolution stating that it was 'desirable that the United Kingdom grant preferential treatment to the products and manufactures of the colonies.' Preference, he said,



## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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involved no surrender of autonomy. It left each self-governing portion of the Empire entirely free to arrange its own tariff, provided that it encouraged production and employment within the Empire, by imposing a lower scale of duties on British than foreign products. But during the discussion it became evident that in the eyes of the Dominion representatives any effective system of inter-imperial reciprocity involved the imposition of duties against foreign foodstuffs imported into the United Kingdom. The British Ministers pointed out that this involved a complete reversal of British fiscal policy, that by the very canon of local autonomy they must be the judges of the fiscal policy which suited their own country, and that in fact it was quite impossible for them to abandon Free Trade. They made it also clear, however, that they could not accept the principle of preference even so far as to apply it to the duties already in force under the existing revenue tariff.

In the end the resolution of 1902, declaring free trade within the Empire impracticable, but recommending the adoption of preferential duties throughout the Empire, was reaffirmed, the British Government dissenting in so far as the resolution implied 'that it was necessary or expedient to alter the fiscal system of the United Kingdom.' After doing a considerable amount of practical work designed to improve cable, mail and steamship communications, to remove minor obstacles to trade, and to produce uniformity in certain legal matters throughout the Empire, the Conference adjourned.

The next few years brought about a surprising change—little suspected in 1907. The hopes of the government about the reduction of armaments were rudely upset. The Hague Conference while doing much to regulate war, and diminish its ferocity, left the question of disarmament severely alone. In 1908 Austria, assured of the support of Germany, abruptly tore up the Treaty of Berlin, without consulting any of the original parties to it, and brought Europe to the verge of war by the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the same year the prospects of economy in the national expenditure on armaments were finally shattered by the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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passage of a third bill for the increase of the German Navy. In March of the following year the scare occurred about the secret acceleration of the German shipbuilding programme. Mr McKenna startled the world by showing the immense development in German shipbuilding and gun and armour-plate making resources. Sir Edward Grey in a weighty statement in the House of Commons said 'The House and the country are perfectly right in the view that the situation is grave. A new situation in this country is created by the German programme. . . . This new (German) fleet will be the most powerful which the world has yet seen . . . . There is no dispute . . . that in order to meet the German fleet when it is completed we shall have to build a new fleet of our own, more powerful than any we have yet got.' As a result the Government, which during the two preceding years of office had built but five Dreadnoughts, found it necessary to accept a programme of no less than eight for the single year 1909.

These events produced a profound effect in other parts of the Empire. The anxiety which had arisen in Australia and New Zealand after the Russo-Japanese war had steadily increased, as public opinion began to realize the facts of the situation. The fixed determination to prevent the immigration of Asiatics had gradually ripened into a conviction that if they were to be sure of carrying out their policy, they must themselves be prepared to resist Asiatic immigration if need be by force. The 'German scare' and the reports of the weakness of the British Navy, following on the removal of all effective battleships from the Far East after the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese treaty of 1905, roused the Australasian people to the need of prompt action. The immediate result was a spontaneous offer of two Dreadnoughts to the British Navy, one (two if necessary) from New Zealand, and one from Australia. The later results were even greater. Australia adopted a far-reaching scheme for a local Navy, and within two years a system of universal military service was inaugurated in both Australia and New Zealand, without the slightest pressure from the British Government. Canada,

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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though not in danger of invasion, also gave clear evidence of her readiness to play her part if the Empire was in serious danger. Her Parliament passed a resolution declaring that it fully 'recognizes the duty of the people of Canada as they increase in numbers and wealth to assume in larger measure the responsibilities of defence.' The resolution went on to say that the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the Imperial Treasury would not be 'the most satisfactory solution of the question of defence' but that 'any necessary expenditure designed to promote the speedy organization of a Canadian Naval service, in co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial Navy' would be 'cordially approved.'

The South African Union constitution had not yet been finally passed, and the South African Premiers could do no more than accept an invitation to a subsidiary conference, issued by the British Government under the resolution of the Conference of 1907, 'to discuss the general question of naval and military defence of the Empire, with special reference to the Canadian resolution, and to the proposals from New Zealand and Australia.'

Thus within two years a special conference had to be summoned to discuss that very problem which the British Government had always put forward as the most important and most urgent of the 'common interests' of the Empire at earlier conferences, but which as already explained, it did not raise at the 1907 Conference as a 'general question' at all.

Though the full effect was not realized at the time the Defence Conference of 1909 applied to the sphere of Naval defence the principles of Imperial co-operation which had been laid down in 1907 on the basis of the organization of the Empire. The Admiralty in a preliminary memorandum discussed the various methods in which the Dominions could 'participate in the burthen of Imperial Defence. It pointed out that the method which would give the 'maximum of power' for a given expenditure would be for 'all parts of the Empire to contribute according to their needs and resources,

## THE ROUND TABLE

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to the maintenance of the British Navy.' But it recognized that the 'individual national sentiment' of the larger and richer Dominions required the creation of local naval forces which would serve as the foundations of 'future Dominion navies' as well as contribute immediately and materially to the requirements of Imperial defence. Accordingly the Admiralty proceeded to 'formulate the broad principles upon which the growth of colonial naval forces should be fostered.' It considered that 'a dominion government desirous of creating a navy should aim at forming a distinct fleet unit' and recommended that it should consist of 'at least' one Dreadnought cruiser, three armoured cruisers, six destroyers and three submarines. It further pointed out that as it was a '*sine qua non*, that successful action in time of war depends upon unity of command and direction' there should be 'one common standard' for the Royal and the Dominion fleets as regards 'shipbuilding, armament and warlike stores . . . training, and discipline.'

Canada accepted the proposals of the Admiralty with certain modifications. 'While, on naval strategical considerations it was thought that a fleet unit on the Pacific . . . might in the future form an acceptable system of naval defence, it was recognized that Canada's double sea board rendered the provision of such a fleet unit unsuitable for the present.' Accordingly it was finally agreed that Canada should acquire four 'Bristol' cruisers, one 'Boadicea' cruiser, and six destroyers. Of these, two 'Bristols' were to be stationed on the Pacific, the rest on the Atlantic coast. Nothing was said about the control of these vessels in time of war.

Australia accepted the fleet unit scheme as a whole, subject to certain temporary financial adjustments. 'In peace time and while on the Australian station, this fleet unit would be under the exclusive control of the Commonwealth Government,' though the King's regulations in regard to naval discipline were to apply. 'When placed by the Commonwealth Government at the disposal of the Admiralty in war

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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time,' their vessels were to be under the control of the Naval Commander-in-Chief.

New Zealand did not feel itself in a position to embark upon the construction and maintenance of a fleet unit by herself, and it was therefore agreed that the New Zealand Dreadnought should be the flag ship of a China-New Zealand fleet unit of the British Navy, and that New Zealand should, in addition to paying for the Dreadnought, contribute £100,000 per annum towards the cost of the Squadron's upkeep. The South African Union had not yet come into being, and its representatives were therefore unable to take action.

Under the head of Military Defence, Mr Haldane asked the Conference to consider proposals for 'so organizing the military forces of the Empire as to ensure their effective co-operation in the event of war.' He recognized that the 'representatives of the Oversea Dominions cannot at the Conference pledge their Governments, or undertake in any way to bind the officers and men composing Oversea Dominion forces to engagements beyond the shores and boundaries of their own countries.' But he went on to point out, 'to organize local forces, so that in a time of supreme emergency they may concentrate and act together as one army in any part of the Empire does not lessen, but actually tends to increase the efficiency of these forces for the local defence of their homes.' After discussion, the Conference declared that 'each part of the Empire is willing to make its preparations on such lines as will enable it, should it so desire, to take its share in the general defence of the Empire,' and subsequently endorsed a report by a sub-committee which recommended the assimilation of forces, weapons, and the arrangements for transport, to British standards. 'The result,' as the Prime Minister announced to Parliament, 'is a plan for so organizing the forces of the Crown wherever they are, that while preserving the complete autonomy of each Dominion, should the Dominions desire to assist in the defence of the Empire in a real

## THE ROUND TABLE

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emergency, their forces could be rapidly combined into one homogeneous Imperial Army.'

Thus, at this Conference for the first time defence was recognized as the most vital of the 'common interests' of the Empire. The Dominions had come to realize how vitally the preparations for Imperial Defence affected themselves, and the British Government had learnt that even in this vital matter it was impossible to concentrate the defensive resources of five nations in their own hands. Even at this date, however, the Admiralty had not apprehended the full meaning of Imperial co-operation as applied to naval defence. In the memorandum already referred to, it had stated that 'it had been recognized by the colonial governments, that in time of war the local naval forces should come under the general direction of the Admiralty.' What the authority was for this statement is unknown. But at all events, the Admiralty's hopes were disappointed. It could get no guarantee of 'unity of command' either in peace or war from Canada or Australia. The Dominion Act authorizing the constitution of a local naval force in both cases declared that the Dominion Government 'may' place the vessels at the disposal of the Admiralty. The Australian Ministers declared their intention of always doing so in time of war. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, on the other hand, said that under present circumstances it was not advisable for Canada 'to mix in the armaments of the Empire,' and that Canada would 'take part in these (imperial) wars, in which to-day they have no voice, only if they think fit to do so.' Thus, the ultimate outcome of the Conference of 1909 was to apply the method of Imperial co-operation as fully to naval defence as it had already been applied to military defence.

But the 1909 Conference was a subsidiary conference, called to discuss 'the general question of naval and military defence.' It did not discuss foreign policy at all. Yet, as Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman had said to the 1907 Conference, 'the cost of naval defence and the

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

responsibility for foreign affairs hang together. This fact was not slow in making itself felt. On the one hand the Dominions had long asserted their claim to negotiate commercial treaties with foreign powers. It was pretty evident that before very long the vigorous and growing nationalism of the Dominions would force the Dominion Governments to intervene in other departments of foreign affairs. So the event proved. The Japanese Alliance was due to expire or be renewed in 1915, and there was considerable anxiety throughout the Dominions, and especially in Australasia as to what was to happen. The Declaration of London obviously affected the trade of the Dominions, and some resentment was expressed in Australia and South Africa that the Dominions had not been consulted during the negotiations. On the other hand there were obvious difficulties\* which were certain to arise in the sphere of foreign affairs, as soon as the Dominion navies were afloat. These navies were not to be under Admiralty control. Were they to be in a position to upset the policy of the British Foreign Office, or to embroil the Empire in war without the consent of the Imperial Government? If not, how were their movements to be controlled?

It was generally recognized therefore,† that the most important work which lay before the Conference of 1911 lay in the sphere of defence and foreign affairs.

The Conference itself which assembled on May 23 last was the first to meet under the famous resolution of 1907, and was conducted in the spirit as well as the letter of that resolution. It was essentially a conference 'between governments.' The Prime Minister presided at all the more important meetings, and in his opening address emphasized the new character of the gathering. He expressed no opinion in favour of the creation of any kind of Imperial Council. 'Each of us intend to remain masters in our own house-

\* See R.T. for May, p. 253.

† See Debates, House of Commons, April 19, 1911. *Times*, April 18, 19, May 23, 1911.



## THE ROUND TABLE

hold.' Autonomy, he said, 'was the lifeblood of our polity.' But it was 'none the less true' that the self-governing communities in the Empire while units, were 'units in a greater unity. And it is the primary object and governing purpose of these periodical conferences that we may take free counsel together in matters which concern us all.' He referred to Imperial defence as the most important of common interests, and thought it desirable to 'take stock together of the possible risks and dangers to which we are or may be exposed, and to weigh carefully the adequacy and the reciprocal adaptiveness of the contributions we are respectively making to provide against them.' He also announced that for the first time the Foreign Secretary would attend the Conference and discuss 'the international situation, so far as it affects the Empire as a whole.' No mention was made by Mr Asquith of commercial relations.

As was expected, the most important discussions hinged on foreign affairs, and the problem of how the British and the Dominion Governments were to keep in consultation with one another over foreign policy. Part of these discussions, being confidential, have not been published, but the reports of the remainder and the results of the Conference indicate clearly what happened. The representatives of Australia, South Africa, and Newfoundland were extremely anxious that the British Government should undertake to consult them in all matters of foreign policy which affected themselves, before action was taken. Mr Fisher considered that the time 'has arrived for the Oversea Dominions to be informed, and whenever possible consulted, as to the best means of promoting the interests of all concerned, when the mother country has decided to open negotiations with foreign powers in regard to matters which involve the interests of the Dominions.' Sir Joseph Ward declared that 'no partnership deserves the name which does not give to the partners at least some voice in the most vital of the partnership concerns.' General Botha said it

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

was his 'profound conviction that it is in the highest interest of the Empire that the Imperial Government should not definitely bind itself by any promise or agreement with a foreign country, which may affect a particular Dominion without consulting the Dominion concerned.' Sir Wilfrid Laurier took a somewhat different view. He distinguished between commercial and other engagements with foreign powers. He claimed for Canada the liberty of negotiating her own treaties of commerce, while he preferred to leave the negotiation of all other treaties to the British Government, reserving to Canada, the right to decide for herself whether she would abide by them or partake in any war to which they might lead. 'If,' he said, 'you undertake to be consulted and to lay down a wish that your advice should be pursued as to the manner in which the war is to be carried on, it implies, of necessity, that you should take part in that war.'

The British Government undertook to meet the views of the majority in the fullest degree. Sir Edward Grey reviewed comprehensively before the Conference the international situation, and as Mr Fisher expressed it, took the Dominion Premiers into the 'innermost counsels' of the Imperial Government. He accepted, without any reserve, a very important resolution moved by Australia and passed unanimously:

(a) 'that the Dominions shall be afforded an opportunity of consultation when framing the instructions to be given to British delegates at future meetings of the Hague Conference, and that conventions affecting the Dominions provisionally assented to at that Conference shall be circulated among the Dominion Governments for their consideration before any such convention is signed: (b) that a similar procedure where time and opportunity and the subject matter permit, shall, as far as possible, be used when preparing instructions for the negotiations of other international agreements affecting the Dominions.'

## THE ROUND TABLE

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Sir Edward Grey also undertook to open negotiations with foreign governments, with the object of securing liberty for any Dominion to make their own commercial treaties with all foreign powers.

Thus, the most important work of the 1911 Conference was to establish between the five responsible governments of the Empire complete agreement about the general lines of foreign policy. It seems to have been generally recognized that it was impossible to apply the principle of co-operation to foreign policy, and that, as the Australian Minister for External Affairs said, there must be 'only one' foreign policy for the Empire. And the result of the discussion was to formulate such a policy. Two international agreements of far reaching importance were actually approved by the representatives of the whole Empire—the revised treaty of alliance with Japan, and the Declaration of London.\* And cordial approval was expressed of the proposed arbitration treaty with America. This was a very remarkable manifestation of Imperial unity.

But even at the Conference it seems to have been generally felt that if there was to be only one foreign policy, there was need for some machinery by which the Imperial Government and the Dominion Governments should keep in close consultation about foreign affairs and other matters between the Conferences. As Mr Fisher said, the Imperial Conference itself would have to meet at 'shorter periods' than four years unless some 'person or body' were constituted to serve as a link between the governments in the intervals. Sir Joseph Ward proposed the creation of an 'Imperial Council of State advisory to the Imperial Government on all questions affecting the interests of His Majesty's Dominions oversea.' But the suggestion was rejected by the Conference, because as Mr Asquith said, if the council was to be really effective 'it would impair, if not altogether destroy, the authority

\* Australia abstained from voting for a resolution approving of the ratification of the Declaration, but expressed approval of the measure.

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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of the Government of the United Kingdom in such grave matters as the conduct of foreign policy, the conclusion of treaties, the declaration and maintenance of peace, or the declaration of war . . . and could impose upon the Dominions by the voice of a body in which they would be in a standing minority . . . a policy of which they might all disapprove, a policy which would, in most cases, involve expenditure, which would have to be met by the imposition on a dissentient community of taxation by its own government.' Other methods were then discussed in connexion with proposals for improving the Secretariat to the Conference itself. The British Government in order to meet the 'general desire' in the Dominions for 'closer touch' with the Home Government, proposed to create a standing Committee of the Conference to carry on the Conference work in the intervals between the sessions. It suggested that the High Commissioners or some other nominee should represent the Dominions. Mr Fisher thought that such a body would be useful if it could discuss informally imperial and foreign problems, in order that the Imperial and the Dominion Governments might both communicate their own and learn each other's views, through their respective representatives. Sir Wilfrid Laurier was afraid that such a body, having no real responsibility might interfere with the smooth working of responsible government. General Botha thought that subsidiary *ad hoc* conferences, or the despatch of Cabinet Ministers to London, was a preferable method of consultation when important matters arose, and that in ordinary cases it would be enough if the Secretary of State called in the High Commissioners for an informal discussion which could then be reported to their respective governments. In the end, no resolution was passed. It is evident that some better machinery of consultation is required than exists at present, but the Conference was unable on this occasion to devise a satisfactory scheme. It seems probable that the pressure of the facts will force a development along the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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lines suggested by General Botha, and that a system of this kind will have to be regularly organized at the next Conference.

As the natural corollary to the understanding that the Imperial Government would in future frame its policy in consultation with the Dominions, it was agreed that the Dominions should not use their navies to defeat the policy of the Foreign Office. It was accordingly arranged that while the Dominions were to retain absolute control over their navies, which were to have naval stations of their own, Dominion vessels were to be governed by Foreign Office instructions whenever they entered foreign ports. It was also agreed that 'the training and discipline' of the British and Dominion navies were to be 'generally uniform,' and that officers and men should be 'inter-changeable.' Finally, in time of war, when a Dominion placed its vessels at the disposal of the Admiralty, they were to 'form an integral part of the British fleet, and remain under the control of the British Admiralty during the continuance of the war.'

A committee of the Conference also discussed and approved the arrangements which had been worked out during the preceding two years by the Imperial General Staff for facilitating the voluntary co-operation of the military forces of the Empire.

For the first time Preference did not occupy an important place in the discussions of the Conference. The reason does not appear from the debates. But it is probable that the attention of the Dominion representatives was chiefly engrossed by the problem of defence and foreign affairs, while their strong insistence on the doctrine of local autonomy made it difficult for them to urge any policy such as that of Mr Deakin in 1909, which involved a complete change in the fiscal policy of the United Kingdom, on a Government which was specifically committed to Free Trade. But the Dominion Premiers did not abandon their view that immediate steps should be taken to strengthen and

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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consolidate the Empire by the development of its material resources, and the promotion of inter-imperial trade. They brought forward therefore a proposal for the appointment of a Royal Commission, 'representative of the whole self-governing Empire,' which should report on the resources of the Empire, and recommend by what 'methods, consistent with the existing fiscal policy of each part, the trade of each part with the others may be improved and extended.' They also devoted much time to the consideration of other methods of improving the means of communication between the various parts of the Empire by legislation affecting shipping, and by reductions in mail, cable, and steamship rates. The Conference also passed two important resolutions, one designed to effect uniformity in Imperial naturalization, the other to bring about an improved Imperial Court of Appeal.

### III. 1911 AND AFTER

THERE has thus been an immense change during the last forty years in the general view of the character and future of the Empire. After an era of despair, coinciding with an almost complete lull in world politics, the self-governing communities of the Empire suddenly awoke to find that they had common interests which they could protect only by common action. For a time there was a divergence of view between the Dominions and Great Britain as to how they should co-operate to defend these common interests. To begin with, the people of Great Britain believed that the correct course was to concentrate in the hands of the British Government, acting as the Imperial Government, whatever defensive resources in men, ships and money the Empire would provide. The Dominions, on the other hand, reluctant to surrender any portion of their autonomy, and necessarily ignorant of foreign and Imperial problems, thought it would be sufficient to strengthen the countries of which the Empire was composed, by measures design-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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ed to increase their population and economic resources, and that there was no serious need for active co-operation for defence. But later years saw a change. The problem of defence came to be recognized as the most urgent common concern. This led to a reconciliation between the views of the Dominions and Great Britain. The indifference of the Dominions disappeared and active steps were everywhere taken to increase the preparations for defence. At the same time the older idea that the control of the system of defence should be concentrated in the hands of the British Government gave way to the newer conception of the free co-operation of five national governments. As was perhaps inevitable during this later time proposals for developing the material wealth which is the foundation of Imperial strength, while not lost sight of, were somewhat thrust into the background.

This great change in opinion has been due to two broad causes. The first cause has been the increase of external pressure. Few people realize how completely the international position of the Empire has changed in the last forty years. At the beginning of the period it was the only world Empire. Outside Europe no power disputed its predominance, except on the American Continent, where the Monroe doctrine of another Anglo-Saxon people rescued a continent from the interference of European powers. To-day the British is only one among many Empires. Except upon the sea it is not noticeably stronger than its neighbours, and even there the radius of its naval supremacy has been greatly decreased.

But the rise of foreign powers has not only destroyed the old isolation of the Empire, it has had a very great effect upon its size and character. In previous issues of the **ROUND TABLE** we have seen how the competition of France and Spain forced upon England the acquisition of her earliest oversea domains. The same causes produced precisely the same effects when they have re-appeared in the later years of the nineteenth century. 'All war,' said Napoleon, 'is a



## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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struggle for position.' Directly foreign powers began to seize upon the uncivilized world, England had to follow suit. She could not afford to see India threatened by the presence of Russia controlling the entry to India from Afghanistan. She would not allow some other power to bestride her route to Australia and the East through Egypt, nor witness the building up of a vast and hostile empire overshadowing her possessions in Africa. If she was to be the mistress of her own destiny she could not permit other and possibly hostile powers to occupy the heights which commanded her citadels, or the roads which linked her Empire. It was this inexorable law of self-defence which led to the acquisition during the later part of the nineteenth century of Egypt, Wei-hai-Wei, Rhodesia and other parts of Africa. It is the same necessity which forbids us to acquiesce in the creation of a German naval base at Agadir, and which impels Canadians to object to the extension of American territory in Alaska, Australasians to protest against the transfer of French Islands in the Pacific to Germany, and South Africans to watch with jealous eyes the proposed exchange of territory in Central Africa.

This enforced expansion has meant a vast increase in the burden of Empire. Since 1871, its area has increased by 2,500,000 square miles, containing 150,000,000 people and situated in every portion of the globe. The Empire is now nearly eleven and a half million square miles in extent and has a population of nearly four hundred and twenty million souls. The burden of maintaining a civilized government throughout this vast area is tremendous enough. It has been multiplied a hundred fold by the renewed expansion of Europe, which has imposed upon us the additional duty of defending endless frontiers all over the earth.

The effect on the Empire, therefore, of the rise of foreign powers has been very marked in the past and is not likely to be less important in the future. It is not surprising that external affairs and co-operation for defence should now have obtained recognition as the most impor-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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tant common interest which the Imperial Conference has to discuss.

The second broad cause of the recent development in the organization of the Empire is the change in the Dominions themselves. Not only has their population much more than doubled since 1871, but a national spirit has arisen which was entirely unexpected forty years ago. It is this 'colonial nationalism' which has rejected the idea of concentrating the power of the Empire in the hands of the British Government, and which has led to the creation of 'local' navies and to the acceptance of co-operation as the basis of Imperial organization. Colonial nationalism is a new and immensely important force. Its vigour, self confidence, even its somewhat aggressive independence, is immeasurably more valuable to the Empire than the apathetic irresponsibility of the 'colonial days.' But it has introduced a new factor into the Imperial problem, the full effects of which cannot yet be seen. Its claims have yet to be reconciled with the claims of the Empire. The Dominions explicitly recognize the duty of defending themselves. Further, they declare and have manifested in practice, their willingness to assist in the defence of the Empire, but they reserve to themselves as free nations the right of deciding when and how their help should be given. It is not yet clear how a system of co-operation is to be made to work in which the parties are not definitely pledged and committed to co-operate even for the common defence.

External pressure and the rise of colonial nationalism, therefore, have been the chief forces in moulding the present organization of the Empire. Let us see exactly what this organization is. The Empire to-day is a partnership in which the full responsibility rests upon one partner and a limited responsibility rests upon the rest. Expressed in greater detail the system is as follows. On the shoulders of Great Britain rests a threefold responsibility. In the first place she is responsible for the foreign policy of the Empire.

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

She has undertaken to consult with the Dominions on the subject, but she is in no way bound to follow their advice. On the other hand, the Dominions, while not bound by the policy of Great Britain, are not free to conduct a foreign policy of their own, save in commercial matters. In the second place, Great Britain is responsible for the defence of the Empire. The Dominions have raised considerable land forces, and Canada and Australia are now building local navies, but these forces are available for Imperial defence only if the Dominion Governments decide to use them for this purpose. Great Britain is committed to defend the Dominions as well as the dependencies. The Dominions are not committed to defend anybody but themselves. In the third place, Great Britain is responsible for the government of the dependencies. In this the Dominions take no part, save in so far as their naval and military forces may, if they so decide, assist in the defence of the dependencies.

Now this system is evidently anomalous, but it works well enough to-day, and nobody, either in Great Britain or the Dominions, seriously objects to it. Can it last? That is at least an open question. At any rate, there are two very good reasons for believing that it cannot continue indefinitely.

The first concerns Imperial policy. Already we see a difficulty looming up. At present, foreign policy and the general arrangement of Imperial defence is left to the British ministry. Under existing conditions nothing else is possible. The Minister for external affairs for Australia said at the recent Conference: 'Of course there must be . . . only one foreign policy in the Empire, and there must be one final authority,' and the British Government was accepted as that authority. Sir Wilfrid Laurier said: 'The diplomatic part of the government of the Empire has of necessity to be carried on by the Government of the United Kingdom,' and General Botha added that he wanted the British Government to take the 'full responsibility.' But the Australian Prime Minister pointed out that the 'nations (the Domin-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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ions) undoubtedly will feel themselves as time passes, desirous of entering into the spirit of the policy that governs the Empire,' and suggested that they might some day wish to conduct a foreign policy of their own. That, indeed, is inevitable. The Dominions cannot help being vitally affected by Imperial policy. They may only desire to be consulted about such matters as affect themselves, but that means being consulted about every cardinal feature of British policy. The Dominions, for instance, are just as vitally concerned by diplomatic combinations in Europe which affect the relative strength of England on the sea, as are the British people, because the safety of the Dominions depends not upon their own preparations only, but mainly upon the supremacy of the British fleet. If it disappeared they would be faced with the choice of depending upon themselves alone or of protecting their interests by alliances with foreign powers.

How long is it likely that the Dominions will agree to the control of Imperial policy, which may thus at any moment plunge them into war, or the only alternative, a declaration of independence,\* remaining in the sole hands of the British Government. It is probable that they would acquiesce for many years to come if it were possible to ensure that the Imperial offices were held by men of the calibre of the late Lord Salisbury, Lord Lansdowne, and Sir Edward Grey, especially if an effective method of continuous consultation between the Imperial and Dominion Governments could also be contrived. But, unfortunately, no such guarantee is possible. Under the existing Imperial system the appointment of the ministers who control the policy and defence of the Empire, and the government of the dependencies is not decided on Imperial grounds. It is a by-product of a domestic party struggle in the British Isles. And general elections in the United Kingdom, as in the Dominions, are fought not on foreign and Imperial politics, but chiefly on issues like education, or social reform, or taxation. At any moment,

\* See the article on the fallacy of Colonial Neutrality in the current issue.

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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therefore, a purely local crisis may bring into power a party which might pursue a policy of dangerous foreign aggression or reckless disarmament. At any moment a party numbering among its members all the people best qualified to manage foreign affairs may be cast from office, for reasons which have nothing to do with their conduct of these matters, and a ministry installed which has neither interest nor knowledge of external problems, and which contains nobody really competent to handle them. What would then be the attitude of the Dominions?

It is true that we have managed to exist under this system hitherto, but what are the probabilities of its succeeding in the future. There has been an immense increase of recent years in the complexity of domestic and foreign problems. Is it likely that a single Parliament will continue to produce two alternative sets of men competent to deal with both domestic and foreign and Imperial affairs? The British public, which is responsible for returning by its votes one or other party to power, may acquiesce in the conduct of external relations by its chosen nominees. But what likelihood is there of the democracies across the seas, who have no part or lot in the elections, being content to see a minister whose personality and policy they trust and respect, being replaced by some unknown and possibly mistrusted man, simply to suit the exigencies of a domestic crisis in the United Kingdom. The confusion of the interests of the Empire with the purely local politics of the British Isles is almost certain to destroy the present system before very long. If there is to be one foreign policy for the Empire on fundamental matters (and anything else means the break up of the Empire), the ministers in charge of Imperial and foreign affairs must be men chosen for their knowledge and policy, must be trusted by the whole self-governing Empire, and must not be liable to be displaced by the party caprices of a single part of it.

The present system is likely to break down for a second

## THE ROUND TABLE

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reason. It will not work when Great Britain ceases to be strong enough to maintain a paramount navy and an expeditionary army sufficient to defend the whole Empire. To-day the preparations of the Dominions, naval and military, are so to speak only of hypothetical value. They are available for Imperial defence only in certain unknown and unknowable contingencies, and Great Britain has therefore to provide for the defence of the whole Empire out of her own resources. In no other way can it be defended. For the Empire is a sea-empire, and the root principle upon which its defence has rested from the earliest times has been the concentration somewhere or other of a fleet larger than any which an enemy or any probable combination of enemies can bring against it. This assured, ultimate victory is, barring accident, also assured. It may take some time for a superior fleet to clear the seas of hostile cruisers and privateers, and some damage may be done to ports and shipping in the meantime. But if the main fleet is stronger than that of the enemy its ultimate success is certain. Therefore, so long as the Dominions retain the right of withholding their forces when the Empire is at war, the duty of concentrating somewhere a paramount fleet, and of maintaining an expeditionary army to support it, must rest on the shoulders of Great Britain alone.

Now this system works well enough to-day because Great Britain is still able and willing to spend £75,000,000 per annum on maintaining the Army and Navy required to make the Empire secure. But what of the future? In the last issue of the ROUND TABLE we showed how the relative strength of Great Britain had declined. There are now only thirty-two British Dreadnoughts built or building as against seventy-four for other powers. The wealth, and certainly the population of Germany, America, Russia, and some of the South American states is increasing, in some cases absolutely, in others relatively, faster than that of the

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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United Kingdom. It is a mathematical certainty that the day will come when the United Kingdom alone will be able to maintain neither fleet nor army sufficient to protect the whole of the British possessions. When that day comes the present arrangements, if they have not already broken down, will disappear. When Great Britain alone is unable or unwilling to maintain a two-power standard against a single rival, or a recognized hostile alliance, either the Dominions must combine their naval forces with those of the mother country, and concentrate wherever danger threatens, a single Empire fleet greater than any that can be brought against it, or both England and the Dominions must make for themselves such alliances with foreign powers as will best protect their territory and possessions. The one course means the real union of the Empire for foreign policy and defence—the equal participation by all the self-governing states in its risks and burdens as well as its privileges and advantages. The other course means the disappearance of the British Empire from the world, and the regrouping of its parts in dependence on other stronger powers. There is no third alternative. To attempt to defend the Empire or its parts by a number of separate fleets, which may or may not be combined after war has broken out, is to invite a weaker enemy to break up the Empire by making war on the different parts and destroying their fleets one by one.

Two broad causes, therefore, make it very improbable that the present organization of the Empire can last for any considerable time. Over one of these causes we have control. If the people of Great Britain manage to keep at the head of the great Imperial offices of the State, men who will command the confidence of the Dominions, and who pursue steadfastly a straightforward, intelligible, and successful policy, and if the people of the Dominions are tolerant and far-sighted enough to accept such a policy as their own, the present arrangement may last. Does



## THE ROUND TABLE

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history give us any reason for expecting that the domestic party system will produce so great a combination of good fortune and good management?

But over the other cause we have no control. We have failed to regulate the growth of our own population and wealth, far less can we hope to regulate the growth of others. Nor by the happiest diplomacy in the world can we prevent the creation of foreign fleets or hostile combinations greater than any that England can fashion in reply. In this respect we are dependent upon the march of events—events which point every year more clearly to the steady decline in the strength of Great Britain as compared with that of foreign powers.

While, therefore, we may regard existing arrangements as adequate, and may congratulate ourselves on the temporary solution of the difficulties\* connected with foreign policy and the use of the Dominion navies, which was devised by the 1911 Conference, it would be folly to persuade ourselves that they can be permanent. Sooner or later, if the Empire is to continue, two changes will be necessary. The control of Imperial and foreign affairs will have to be divorced from the domestic party politics of the British Isles. And the Dominions, while gaining a real share in the control of Imperial and foreign policy, will have to throw in their lot unreservedly with the United Kingdom and with one another in defending and promoting those 'common interests' which the Empire exists to serve. When and how these changes will come about we do not feel disposed to prophecy. They will not be simple to devise or easy to compass. But it may not be out of place to examine whether there is any common purpose in the Empire which is likely to justify or carry through so great a revolution in our existing arrangements.

There can be no doubt that Imperialism in its latest form corresponds to a dominant and it would seem growing instinct in the self-governing peoples of the British Empire.

\* See ROUND TABLE No. 3, May, 1911, p. 252.

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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There are great differences of opinion as to the machinery by which it should express itself and the objects it should hold in view. But there is little cavilling at the existence of the Empire itself. On what real foundation does the almost universal sentiment in favour of Imperial Union, of 'strengthening' or 'consolidating' the Empire, finally rest? From what basis do all propositions for reciprocity in trade, union for defence, and so forth, ultimately spring? Why should Great Britain wish to preserve an Empire which gives her little material profit in return for the immense burden of armaments and responsibility it entails? Why should the Dominions want to remain a part of it, instead of setting up on their own as independent nations? Why should Canadians, for instance, indignantly repudiate the notion that they wish to cast in their lot with the great pacific Anglo-Saxon power along their southern frontiers, instead of with the scattered British communities across many thousand miles of sea?

According to the older text books all States depend for their cohesion upon force, upon a common ancestry, common traditions, a common language, or a common religion. A more recent view is that the basis of nationalism is a consciousness of a common economic existence. But none of these bonds serve to explain the unity of the Empire. No force could compel the self-governing Dominions to remain within the Empire contrary to their will. There is no common ancestry and no common race for an Empire which is composed of Anglo-Saxons, French and Dutch, not to mention many other minor racial elements. The warring of the Christian sects is tenfold more evident than the unity of the Christian creed. Even common traditions can hardly explain the real loyalty to the idea of the Empire of many thousands of immigrants or of the inhabitants of the late republics in South Africa. Nor can we believe that in these days, notable for the phenomenal growth of international trade, and the appearance of a cosmopolitan system of finance, the still rising sentiment of

## THE ROUND TABLE

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nationalism finds its sole root in tariffs or other economic laws. Though each of these forces may contribute to the sentiment of Imperial unity they are not sufficient, singly or together, to explain it.

There is another and more positive basis. The chief reason for the sentiment for Imperial unity is the conscious or unconscious belief of the people of the Empire in their own political system. This belief is based on no mere indiscriminating pride. The inhabitant of the British Empire is ready enough to concede that in the realm of reason and the fine arts, the French are far ahead of his own compatriots; that the Germans have a sense of national discipline and a power of organization which he cannot emulate; that the Chinese have a gift of philosophy compared to which his own is but a rule of thumb. But he believes that in the political sphere he leads the world. Just as he has evolved a social code by which personal honour can be sustained without resort to the absurdity of the duel, so he has devised a political and constitutional code, which combines in a pre-eminent degree the liberty of the individual with the strength and security of the State. The British system, he believes, gives effect as no other system has done to that first principle of political action, that the purpose of the State is not to glorify itself, but to promote the highest good of its citizens.

It is difficult to realise how strong is the grip of these common political ideas. Perhaps the most remarkable proof lies in the absolute acceptance of the British Imperial system by the inhabitants of the two Boer republics within eight years of the termination of a terrible three years' war. To those who know, the passage of the Act of Union was the final and voluntary acceptance by the Boer peoples of the fundamental ideals on which the British Empire rests. And if these are strong enough to convert Republicans into Imperialists, must they not be an infinitely stronger bond between those who, whatever their descent, have been born and bred under the Union Jack?

But the sympathy which springs from identity in

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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institutions and political methods was not sufficient to produce any sentiment for Imperial unity until the Empire was threatened with attack from outside. We have seen how strikingly the consciousness of a common purpose has increased within the Empire under the continual pressure of the last forty years, despite the rise of a positively disintegrating force in the new nationalism of the Dominions. Up to the present it has chiefly taken the form of a recognition of the need for co-operation in preparing against attack. It is now taking a new character. The conviction is growing up that the peoples of the Empire have a common interest in upholding their political principles, in international as well as in domestic affairs. For not only does the British Empire differ from the European Empires in its system of government, it differs from them even more in its view of international relations.

With the peoples of the Empire a declaration of war for the promotion of selfish national ends has come to be generally regarded as immoral. Any government which pursued a policy of aggrandisement leading to war would instantly fall from power. It is not merely that the British people are 'satiated' with their possessions, it is that, possibly for that very reason, they have reached a stage of development when they regard national aggrandisement by violence as on a par with personal aggrandisement by violence.

Now this is a point of view which is shared by only two other peoples in the world, the American and the Chinese. To the German bureaucrat, as to the Russian and the Japanese, war is simply an instrument of policy—to be used or not solely according to the balance of national advantage. The traditional policy inaugurated by Bismarck is to regard the national good as transcending all other claims. As the German Emperor said, 'the principal thing is not to live one's life at the expense of others, not to attain one's end at the cost of the Fatherland, but solely and alone to keep the Fatherland before one's eyes, solely and alone to stake

## THE ROUND TABLE

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all the powers of mind and body upon the good of the Fatherland.'

We have during the past few days a perfect example of the difference between the British and the continental view. The Agadir incident was, as an American paper termed it, simply an 'international hold up.' The German foreign office saw an opportunity of furthering the interests of Germany by the display and possibly by the use of force. It cared not at all that in the process it would have to tear up an international treaty, on whose sacredness it had been insisting for the preceding three years, and would inevitably bring the world to the verge of war. The 'coup' was directed to the advantage of the Fatherland and that was enough. Nothing could demonstrate more completely the essential difference between the British and the continental point of view, than the total failure of the German bureaucrat to realize that the violent method of action he adopted was that most calculated to array England against him. British interference was caused, not by any belief in the superior merits of the French case, for there is little doubt that Germany has good grounds for complaint against France. It was not caused only by a desire to protect British interests. At bottom it was caused by the necessity of defending British standards of international morality. The British Government had to interfere partly under her engagements with France, partly in her own interests, but mainly in order to vindicate to the world her belief that international blackmail based on a selfish and reckless use of force is barbarous and uncivilized.

The real lesson of the Agadir incident, is the proof it gives of the part that the people of the British Empire have perforce to play in the world. There are at present two codes of international morality—the British or Anglo-Saxon, and the continental or German. Both cannot prevail. If the British Empire is not strong enough to be a real influence for 'fair dealing' between nations, the reactionary standards of the German bureaucracy will triumph, and it will then

## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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only be a question of time before the British Empire itself is victimized by an international 'hold up' on the lines of the Agadir incident. Unless the British peoples are strong enough to make it impossible for backward rivals to attack them with any prospect of success, they will have to accept the political standards of the aggressive military powers, just as France has already had to accept those of Germany.

That is one common purpose of the Empire—a purpose based not merely on a belief in our own ideas, but on a shrewd calculation of self-interest. But there is another aspect of the case. Their conception of liberty and government has led the British to assume immense responsibilities for the government of subject peoples. Having interfered, originally perhaps for the sake of trade or to forestall some rival in the possession of strategic points essential to their own safety, they felt compelled to do something to improve the lot of the people they controlled. They did not impose upon them their own ideas of religion, or education, or learning. They did not interfere with local custom and practice, so far as it was consistent with ordinary civilized standards. But they uprooted the older system of government which was founded on tyranny, violence, and frequent injustice, and replaced it by a system which gave the individual peace and good order, the protection of an impartial justice, and economic improvements designed to diminish the ravages of famine and pestilence. This was not all done as we have seen for purely unselfish motives. But whether British action was justified or not, the facts remain. The British have upset in India, Egypt, and elsewhere the earlier system of government, and replaced it by something which is unquestionably better, but which for the present and for many years to come, they, and they alone, will be able to sustain.

Now it is impossible for the British to abandon their responsibility for the good government of the dependencies. They can no more do so and preserve their self-respect than can a father abandon his children before they are able

## THE ROUND TABLE

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to fend for themselves. Yet the immense increase in the responsibilities of the dependent Empire during the last forty years has already been noted in this article. Is it too much to say that just as Great Britain has already become less able to defend the Empire against foreign attack, so she may gradually in the future become unable to discharge, by herself, her duty to the subject peoples? And if so, what will the attitude of the Dominions be? Will they let the British Empire in the dependencies crumble into anarchy and ruin? It is not a little significant that for the first time in the history of the Conference, Mr Asquith, in his opening address this year, spoke to his colleagues of their 'common trusteeship . . . of the interests and fortunes of fellow subjects who have not yet attained, or perhaps in some cases may never attain, to the full stature of self-government.' This may seem but little of a 'common interest' to-day. But is it not becoming a common responsibility? And if so, is it to be a bond of union or a cause of disruption? The Dominions to-day, like America in times gone by, are inclined to pursue a policy of isolation, to shut themselves off from the backward world outside under a colonial Monroe doctrine—the doctrine of non-commitment to the responsibilities of the Empire. But may not necessity and their own convictions drive them from it as they have driven America. May they not come to see that their title to fame in history will rest not upon their success in clinging to the privileges, and repudiating the obligations, of Empire, not upon their success in throwing aside the only opportunity of moulding the world's history which is open to them, not upon their success in becoming a number of impotent weakling states like Belgium or Switzerland, but upon the courage and spirit with which they carry on the high civilizing work which their ancestors began. And if the Dominions rise to this view, may not the people of Great Britain come to realize that they can no longer control, as their own private concern, the Empire they have inherited, but that they must share the conduct



## THE CONFERENCE & THE EMPIRE

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of its affairs on equal terms with the younger nations across the seas?

There is, therefore, in the British Empire a unity which it is often difficult to discern amid the conflict of rival nationalities, provincial politics, and geographical differences. It is a unity which is based upon the conviction among the British self-governing communities that the political system of the Empire is indispensable to their own progress, and that to allow it to collapse would be fatal alike to their happiness and their self-respect. It is a unity which may come to be based upon the recognition of a common responsibility for a great civilizing power. It is a unity which, symbolized in the monarchy, has already begun to develop a rudimentary institution of self expression. It is no little thing that in less than fifteen years a casual conference of delegates should have grown almost imperceptibly into a plenary council in which the representatives of the dominant peoples take counsel how they shall protect and develop the Imperial system to which they all belong. Imperialism has long suffered from the odious meanings which attach to the word. It has been said to stand for the ambition of world dominion, for the coercion of the colonies, for the creation of lofty but superfluous institutions. Modern Imperialism asks for none of these things. It stands rather for a deep-rooted confidence in the soundness of our political institutions, and for a resolute determination to uphold our principles before the world. And if this be so, is there not reason to hope that this spirit, which has made the Empire what it is, will find the way to overcome the difficulties which still confront it?

## THE SPIRIT OF THE CORONATION.

NATIONS carry within their consciousness premonitions of their destiny. That ancient phrase, "the imperial crown of England," was used, no doubt, in the first instance, to denote the assertion of our kings that they were no vassals of the Holy Roman Empire, but not till centuries later did the word receive its full content, and acquire a reality corresponding to its true significance. When England broke with the imperial Church of Rome, whose suzerainty had for centuries been admitted, this claim was reasserted, as though after a passing lapse, and it received new meanings in the spiritual sphere. Our poets also had their premonitions. When Shakespeare makes old Lancaster speak of "this sceptred isle" he invented a phrase which now can be used in a sense infinitely higher and wider than any which it could have had either when Lancaster lived, or when Shakespeare wrote. The loyal, simple-minded Cavaliers, who followed and died for Charles I, really fought in a cause far greater than they knew, for the full importance of an hereditary monarchy had not yet been revealed. As Pascal says, the simple-minded form true opinions for (sometimes) wrong reasons. Indeed, in that contest both parties, as usually happens, were maintaining one side of a complete truth, and the nation was blundering along its way towards a Constitution which should secure freedom without destroying unity and strength. This problem, then almost confined to these islands, is now that which is being worked out by the States of the Empire. An unsuccessful attempt to deal with it cost us the schism of the United States of America, and that lesson also was learnt.

We were so full-fed last June by detailed and over-picturesque descriptions of the ceremonial events in London that there was some danger lest men might fail to see the wood by reason of the trees, and lest the thing signified might be for-

## THE SPIRIT OF THE CORONATION

gotten in the admiration for the things signifying. What is a pageant? It has been the fashion of late years to present historical pageants in our ancient cities, and the example has been followed in Canada and South Africa. These are but representations of representations. There have been representations of such events as the battle of Naseby. But the battle itself, with all its slaying and shouting, was but the outward visible form of an inward visible battle, that of contending ideas and wills. So the recent processions and rites in London were the outward visible form of an inward and spiritual fact, the unseen unity of wills. Thus the whole thing was of the nature of a sacrament, or embodiment of the unseen in the seen. The ecclesiastical, the military, the naval, and the popular, manifestations set forth various sides of this great underlying "thing in itself." The Coronation had all the character of a religious symbol. The pristine meaning of the Latin word religion lay in the idea of "binding," in various senses. There is the binding of man with the divine, the subject of metaphysical theology; the binding back, or restraining, which is at the bottom of that morality through which alone nations live, and the binding together of man with man, which is the foundation of unity in Church and State. This last "binding" imports and involves something hierarchical, the relation of chief to follower, as well as that of comrade to comrade, for, as Shakespeare says,

"Take but degree away, untune that string  
And mark what discord follows."

All these aspects of religion are summed up in the sublime words and the symbolic rites of the ancient English Coronation service. We recognize therein that power descends from the supreme source of all power, that centre which we name God; we recognize that the end and aim of government is the loftiest morality; we consecrate our relation to each other in, and through, our relation to our earthly chief and centre of unity.

## THE ROUND TABLE

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All this was absolutely true in those early ages when the Coronation service was first composed, but it is true now in a wider sense. *Then* the words and rites had direct relation only to a kingdom bounded by these seas, and not even including the fair realm of Scotland; *now* they relate to an empire extending to many lands and many races. Our great sacrament of unity has assumed a significance as vast as anything well can have on this planet. The Crown is not only the symbol, but the chief cause, of unity; it is a binding force in the British Empire. Remove this centre of attraction and the empire would dissolve.

“There must be [said a writer ten years ago], indeed there visibly is a rise in the importance of the Throne. In the nineteenth century the actual power of the Crown in connexion with the internal affairs of the United Kingdom almost vanished, but during the same century the significance and influence of the Monarchy—its spiritual sovereignty, so to speak—has expanded in a vastly wider sphere. What it has lost in respect of domestic it has gained, and far more also, in respect of imperial affairs. At present the direct relations of India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Africa and the rest, are with the Crown. It is not merely the symbol, but the real bond of unity. As without the relation of each of its provinces to the Supreme Pontiff the cosmopolitan and many-nationed Church which centres at Rome could not hold together, so without the relation of each of its parts to the King the British Empire would fall asunder and be dispersed. What, indeed, are English Cabinet Ministers to the princes of India? Not even names. How many among the Indian millions, or those other darker and barbarous millions who live behind the African coast, have so much as heard of the existence of the British Parliament? Even Canadians and Australians are but faintly interested in the struggles and questions of political parties here in England; they have their own affairs. But in all these lands east and west the occupant of the Throne is to every man his own sovereign. A Real Presence, if one may so speak,

## THE SPIRIT OF THE CORONATION

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makes itself felt throughout the world. An ordinary English nobleman goes out to India, or to Canada, or to Australia, and carries with him, such is the magic of imagination, the atmosphere of imperial majesty. It is not race, nor law, nor common language, nor similar institutions, nor religion, nor military force that holds together this strange aggregation of many races, many laws, many languages, many kinds of government, many religions and strong peoples capable, if they chose, of achieving independence. The bond is not the British Parliament; it is not the British Cabinet; it is the Imperial Crown. To this central point lines converge from all the ends of the earth. Ideas, to rule men through imagination, must be incarnate; and, if they are to rule great masses of men in every degree of civilization and intelligence, must be embodied in a form easily understood by the simplest through the experience of family life. There are not many Miltons in the world whose imaginations can clothe abstractions, and a republic, like some forms of religion, is only suited to a few homogeneous peoples. England or Australia might be a republic, not so the British Empire.”\*

The great events of recent years, the Jubilee in 1887 of Queen Victoria of glorious memory, her Jubilee of 1897, the Coronation of Edward VII, the Coronation of George V, have assembled in London for common rites representatives from all parts of the Empire. To those descended from her own stock, who, or whose fathers left her shores for Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa, England might say in the words of Apollo's Oracle to the home-seeking Trojans:

“Dardanidae duri! quae vos a stirpe parentum  
Prima tulit tellus, *eadem* vos ubere laeto  
Accipiet reduces; antiquam exquirite matrem!  
Hic domus Æneae cunctis dominabitur oris,  
Et nati natorum; et qui nascentur ab illis.”†

\* From *Imperium et Libertas*, by Bernard Holland, published in 1901.

† Æneid III.

## THE ROUND TABLE

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Strong sons of Troy! the land which bore you first  
From our old stock, the same shall joyfully  
Receive you now returning; then, seek out  
The ancient mother. Here the ancestral House,  
Sons of our sons, and those from these to spring,  
Shall rule throughout the world.

To that far greater number who have been brought within  
the bounds of the empire by war and conquest England can  
justly use those famous lines addressed by the Spaniard  
Claudian to Rome:

*"Haec est in gremium victos quae sola recepit,  
Humanumque genus communi nomine fovet,  
Matris, non dominae, ritu; civesque vocavit  
Quos domuit, nexuque pio longinqua revinxit."*

She has received the conquered to her breast;  
She only, cherishing the human race  
In one associate name; not in the mode  
Of mistress, but of mother. She alone  
Has named those fellow citizens, whom she tamed,  
And bound them from afar with ties of love.

It is good for us, here in England, at times inclined to  
despondency by our burdens, to be brought in touch with  
the vigorous and sanguine life pulsing in those, more lightly  
burdened, who visit us upon these high occasions. It is good  
for them also to be brought into touch with more centrally  
situated and experienced minds, and to learn to see things  
in somewhat truer proportions, perhaps, than they can in  
their own countries. There is that in London which stimu-  
lates thought and feeling. St Paul's, with its atmosphere, a  
centre of world-wide religion; Westminster Hall, with all  
the associations of ancient state; the "Abbey which makes  
us one"; the City, that "power house of the line"; the  
river uniting this immense port with the oceanic world;  
the wealth, the cloudy magnitude, and the ordered tumult  
of London, must make those who, for the first time, come

## THE SPIRIT OF THE CORONATION

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from smaller centres to visit it, have something of the feeling of Virgil's countryman on returning from a visit to Rome:

"Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Melibae, putavi  
Stultus ego huic nostrae similem."

Mistakenly, I thought the place called Rome  
A city like to ours, Oh Melibæus!

One says this in no spirit of vain-glory, but there can be no visible empire without a visible centre, nor for the whole British Empire can there be, in any time worth at present considering, any centre but London.

But the Coronation must be regarded also from a point of view which is, as things now stand, less satisfying. If the hereditary Throne is of such importance, that importance is enhanced, as it ought not to be, by the present absence of other common institutions, which ought to exist. On one side, the Empire is a solid, real and concretely embodied fact. The destinies of over 350,000,000 of people are as much controlled from London, in the last resort, as the empire of Trajan was from Rome. The vicissitudes of English politics, turning mainly upon the provincial questions of these two small islands, supply the King with a succession of Ministers—mostly hitherto belonging, whatever their party, to the same social caste—who have, individually, or collectively as a Cabinet, the final word in all important decisions affecting India, the Crown Colonies and the great African Protectorates. This is real imperial government, and it all centres in a single block of stately buildings in Whitehall. In this government the self-governing Dominions have no direct share. Our relations here with them resemble those which, in the case of foreign States, are transacted diplomatically by the Foreign Office. The Dominions are close allies, but not even bound, according to the latest doctrine expounded by the Canadian Premier, and having, appa-



## THE ROUND TABLE

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rently, some support in South Africa, and even in Australia, to take part, unless they approve, in wars waged in the name of the King. Liability so limited is almost non-existent. The King is, in fact, the head of an empire-controlling nation which is in more or less loose alliance with other States acknowledging his nominal sovereignty. He is somewhat in the position of the King of Prussia in respect to the North German confederation of States before 1871, when the real German Empire was constituted.

The British Empire thus has two aspects. It consists of a real Empire bound up with an alliance of independent commonwealths. The real Empire almost entirely rests upon a wealthy and populous, but small country, which is continually being drained of its most vigorous and enterprising inhabitants who go to swell the strength of the Commonwealths, which at present give little direct assistance towards maintaining the burden of empire.

So far as regards these States and the United Kingdom, the relations of each to the Crown are like those derived from the force of gravitation, which can make hewn stones, placed together in a certain way, form the walls of a kind of edifice. But no building is secure against downfall when storms arise, nor can it serve purposes of security or beauty, unless nature be supplemented by art, and cement be used to bind the stones firmly together. In buildings which we call States or Empires, political institutions, common laws and common councils act as cement. They turn to good use the mere feelings of kinship and loyalty, just as the art of the mason turns to use the forces of gravitation and adhesion. As between the United Kingdom, India, the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, the Empire is a firmly cemented building. As between this unity and the self-governing Dominions, it is a pile of uncemented, or, at best, most thinly cemented, stones.

The succession of Colonial or "Imperial" Conferences are in themselves a good beginning in the process of con-

## THE SPIRIT OF THE CORONATION

verting this primitive structure into a work of political art, but definite proposals for hastening the process have not, so far, come to much result. Are we awaiting the bitter experience of a great storm? Still the Conference itself takes more and more a definite shape; wider subjects are brought within its view; and each time that it meets it wears more clearly the character of an Imperial Council. This year, 1911, the foundations of our foreign policy were submitted to the Conference in order to inform, and to obtain the concurrence of, all the Governments. This was a new and forward step; it had not been taken at any previous Conference; it was received with satisfaction by the representatives of the Dominions; it does credit to the present Government in London; and it is enough, notwithstanding back currents in some directions, to show that the main stream is steadily moving towards the end of true imperial unity. The more one studies history, the less do events seem to be due to the action of individual statesmen in causing or resisting great tendencies. It has, for instance, been because Liberal statesmen here thought it necessary to refuse the road of greater commercial union that they have been obliged to advance the more by other roads, perhaps less broad and easy.

Sooner or later—we may believe—the complete fabric of British Empire will be built. If, which Heaven grant, the next Coronation does not occur for another thirty or forty years, the reality may then be found to correspond more nearly to that ideal of which the Coronation rites are symbols. An empire now, in part, ideal or invisible, may have become wholly real and visible. It is a matter of incarnation of the spirit. At that time, perhaps, the Government of the United Kingdom will deal only with the domestic affairs of that kingdom; while a permanent Imperial Council will advise the King upon all matters of foreign, imperial, and international commercial policy, and on the strength, mode of levying and maintaining, and the disposition of his naval and military forces. Such a Council might

## THE ROUND TABLE

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be in some direct or indirect way chosen by the electorates of ourselves and the Dominions.

But, to achieve a result of this kind, England must sacrifice part of her exclusive control over Asiatic and African territories, while the peoples of the self-governing Dominions must sacrifice some of their absolute independence in matters of external policy and defence, substituting some kind of more formal co-operation. The exchange of sacrifice is not unequal. No real union, whether of individuals in marriage, or of States, is achieved without cost, but without union there is no fruit. The problem lies in achieving the right balance between the freedom of the individual and the strength of the community.

Even if such results should prove to be impracticable, yet we cannot know this until we have done all that in us lies to test the impracticability. But, if they shall be achieved, then the symbol or sacrament of religious unity, so strikingly presented by the rites in Westminster Abbey, will denote the real and visible unity of the whole British Empire. Till then this sacrament in part, only, denotes a reality, and, for the rest, foreshadows things to come, as, according to the old Christian thinkers, events in ancient Jewish history foreshadowed and signified those fulfilled in the New Testament. Faith, says St Paul, is the "substance of things hoped for." Or, as one might say, that which is in future to be made apparent does already exist behind the veil of non-appearance, and moves our minds to action. "By faith Moses forsook Egypt."

## COLONIAL NEUTRALITY

### THE DOCTRINE OF COLONIAL NEUTRALITY.

**I**N the last number of the ROUND TABLE reference was made to the ambiguous international situation which might result, even in peace-time, from the movement of Dominion navies not under the control of the Imperial Admiralty. This difficulty is dealt with in the recent Naval Agreement between the Admiralty and the Governments of Canada and Australia, by assigning certain stations to the local squadrons, and providing that they are not to enter foreign ports, whether within or beyond these stations, without the concurrence of the Imperial Government. As soon as war breaks out, however, the agreement seems to contemplate that the Dominion navies will not form part of the Imperial forces if their respective governments so determine.

The principle underlying this arrangement has been clearly stated on many occasions by Canadian and Australian statesmen—most recently by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the debate on the Declaration of London in the Imperial Conference, when he said:

“We have taken the position in Canada that we do not think we are bound to take part in every war, and that our fleet may not be called upon in all cases.”

We are not concerned here with the strategical aspect of the question, though the disadvantages of divided control in time of war are sufficiently obvious. As Lord Selborne said in 1902, “the sea is all one, and the British Navy therefore must”—or should—“be all one.” But the matter goes beyond strategical considerations, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself has pointed this out when, in November, 1910, he said to the Canadian House of Commons:

“We should stand on our own policy of being masters in our own house, of having a policy for our own  
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## THE ROUND TABLE

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purpose, and leaving to the Canadian Parliament, to the Canadian Government, and to the Canadian people to take part in these wars, in which to-day they have no voice, only if they think fit to do so."

The right, in fact, is claimed for the Dominions to determine, not only what part they will take in future wars, but whether they will take any part at all.

There has been a good deal of discussion of late about the precise meaning of this declaration. It may be opportune, therefore, to examine briefly exactly what it involves, and what is meant by the further doctrine of colonial neutrality to which it has given rise.

The real meaning of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's declaration is not very easy to understand, owing to the loose phraseology of the expression "taking part." There are more ways of taking part in a war than sending ships to join the battle fleet of one or other belligerent. If war broke out to-morrow between the United Kingdom and a first-class naval power, Canada and Australia would have to decide, not merely whether or not she would incorporate her ships in the Imperial Navy, but many other questions of difficulty and danger, if she is to carry out her policy of "not taking part." Would she permit her territory to be used as a base of naval or military operations by the British forces? Would she give unrestricted use of her ports to British men-of-war to take refuge, concentrate, or refit? Could they bring their prizes there, and would she establish prize courts for their condemnation? Would these privileges be granted or refused to the warships of the enemy? What action would she take if the enemy's fleet appeared on the Canadian station? Again, would she continue to trade with other portions of the Empire? Would she admit merchant vessels flying the British flag to the harbours, and would her navy protect them while in her waters? How would she arrange for the protection of her own mercantile marine sailing to other British ports? Would she intern the merchant ships of

## COLONIAL NEUTRALITY

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the enemy lying in her harbours at the outbreak of hostilities? Or would she permit the trade with the enemy to continue as if there was no war? Finally, would she expect the British Navy to defend her commerce on the high seas?

Questions of this kind could be multiplied, but on any known theory of international law there can be but one answer. The citizens of the Dominions are subjects of His Britannic Majesty, and their territories are part of his dominions. When he is at war, they are at war. In many of the minor campaigns of the Empire, this status of belligerency is no doubt more technical than real, but in a first-class war, when the deadly struggle sways from side to side of the world-wide arena, every portion of the King's dominions "takes part," in the sense that when one is at war, all are at war.

The fact is that any departure from an attitude of perfect impartiality is "taking part," *pro tanto*, in the war, and any "taking part," however passive, involves the possibility, and indeed probability, of being drawn into more active participation in the struggles and sufferings of an empire which may be fighting for its life. It follows, therefore, that a dominion can only carry out the declared policy of "not taking part" in a war in which it does not wish to be involved by adopting the same attitude of strict neutrality as do foreign nations. For international law recognizes no middle position between whole-hearted belligerency and absolute neutrality.

This dilemma has been recognized, and indeed proclaimed, by a certain school of thought. According to this school, strict neutrality is the proper attitude for the Dominions, and an article in the Pretoria *Volkstem* of July 4, while advocating this attitude on grounds of policy, argues as follows for its legality:

"The South African Constitution of 1909 is in full accord with the theory that neutrality is per-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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missible in the case of a war in which England or any other independent State of the Empire might be involved. . . . It is wholly incorrect to think that in case of England making war all self-governing British States are automatically involved. An express declaration or Act from the different Colonial Governments is essential before any neutrality can be broken."

This doctrine of neutrality seems indeed to be the only logical basis for the policy of not "taking part" in any war, and the only possible way in which a Dominion can refrain from "taking part" in an Imperial war.

Let us consider for a moment what this means. It means that the Dominion may render no assistance or comfort to the Imperial forces. Imperial warships, if allowed to enter the Dominion's harbours at all, must leave at once after taking on board the bare *minimum* of supplies sufficient to carry them to the nearest British port. The vessels of the Dominion navy must remain idle spectators while isolated detachments of the Imperial fleet, or merchant ships belonging to other Dominions and flying the British flag, are captured or sunk under their very guns. Men of the Imperial forces who take refuge in the Dominion's territory must be disarmed and held to parole. In the case of Canada and South Africa Imperial warships must even be denied admission to the fortified stations of Halifax, Esquimalt and Simon's Town, constructed with Imperial money for Imperial purposes, for it is impossible to suppose that South Africa could remain neutral while part of its territory served as a base of operations for one of the belligerents.

The same obligation of neutrality would be imposed on the Dominions' mercantile marine. The greater part of the external trade of all the Dominions consists in supplying foodstuffs and other raw material to the United Kingdom. Much of this, under the Declaration of London, may be declared contraband, and, though the non-contraband trade would in theory, at all events, be free from interruption, vessels carrying contraband would be liable to



## COLONIAL NEUTRALITY

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seizure, and, being neutrals, would not be able to invoke the protection of their own ships of war.

Even if any Dominion were found willing to accept the loss and humiliation involved in such a neutrality, what certainty or even probability is there that the enemy would recognize and respect this neutral status? In the eye of international law the British Empire is under one sovereignty, and its citizens possess a single nationality. The Empire is an international unit. It is difficult to see how a foreign power could distinguish a citizen of, say, New Zealand from any other British citizen, respecting the friendly neutrality of the former and treating the latter as an alien enemy: if, on the other hand, the New Zealander, throwing to the winds the cautious correctness of his government, enlisted in the Imperial forces, his position would be both doubtful and dangerous. The same difficulties arise in the case of the mercantile marine. The merchant ships of the Dominion would be precluded from flying the British flag, and undoubtedly some restriction would have to be placed on other British owners who would try to obtain some of the advantages of neutrality by hoisting the Dominion ensign. No doubt the enemy might in some cases willingly recognize an asserted neutrality which secured him from attack in one quarter at least, but he would not be bound so to recognize it, and his recognition would obviously depend on his estimate of the relative advantages and disadvantages of doing so. This is the fundamental fallacy of the theory of colonial neutrality, for, as General Botha said in an interview with Reuter's Agency:

"If it is to the advantage of the Empire to have a number of its Colonies neutral, obviously it is to the disadvantage of the enemy. The enemy decides whether any part of the Empire is to be left alone."

In fact, as General Botha said later, "for South Africa or for any other Dominion to be neutral while the Mother

## THE ROUND TABLE

Country is at war is an impossibility"—an impossibility, that is to say, so long as the Dominion concerned remains part and parcel of the British Empire. The only manner in which any portion of the Empire can secure the rights of a neutral in time of war is by a formal separation as a nation from the remaining dominions of the Crown. Here, again, there is no middle course between absolute solidarity in the international sphere and complete independence. "Colonial neutrality" when the Empire is at war with a first-class power, is simply another word for "declaration of independence."

Even assuming, however, that an attitude of optional neutrality is possible, either by complete separation or by the doctrine of not taking part in Imperial wars, it remains to consider whether it would achieve its object of enabling the Dominion concerned "to have a policy for its own purpose," as Sir Wilfrid Laurier claimed. The rights of neutrals rest on what the law-books call "an international sanction." But in international affairs, more than anywhere else, might is right. We have seen a recent flagrant instance of the value of neutrality to a country which takes no other steps to protect itself, in the case of China, whose neutral territory was made practically the sole theatre of the prolonged and devastating war between Russia and Japan. That is likely to be the fate for some time to come of neutrals who cannot find some means of compelling belligerents to respect their rights.

There are three ways only in which this can be done. The first is by making such preparations for defence that, if its neutrality is violated by one combatant, the neutral can repel force by force, and intervene with decisive effect on the other side. As far as can be foreseen, no self-governing British colony will be in this position for many years to come. The next way is, if a neutral is not strong enough to protect itself, to have its neutrality guaranteed by some more powerful country. A neutral dominion has *ex hypothesi* refused the protection of its own Imperial navy,

## COLONIAL NEUTRALITY

for it cannot be expected that the Empire will assume responsibility for a portion which repudiates all obligations in return. The guarantee must therefore be sought in the alliance of some foreign power, for which a price must be paid. If that price cannot be paid by assistance with men and ships in time of war, it must be satisfied in some other way. In either case, the neutral Dominion does not stand much chance of "a policy for its own purpose."

There is a third way of securing the neutrality of a country which is not strong enough to protect itself, and that is by placing it under the protection of some powerful neighbour. In Hall's *International Law* a protected state is defined as

"one which, in consequence of its weakness, has placed itself under the protection of another power on defined conditions, or has been so placed under an arrangement between powers the interests of which are involved in the disposition of its territory."

The only civilized protected States at the present time are the republics of Andorra and San Marino. At the time of the Crimean War, the now extinct Republic of the Ionian Isles was a State protected by Great Britain, and as such was allowed to claim the rights of a neutral in the British courts. It remains to be seen whether any British Dominion is prepared to accept such a status as a condition of effective neutrality.

The plain fact of the matter is that the advocates of colonial neutrality are attempting the impossible. They are hoping to be able to combine the advantages of membership of the British Empire, with avoidance of its risks and obligations. That has never been possible. It was not possible in the old Colonial days when the British fleet was the only fleet, for if it had ever been defeated, the victor would have been able to deal with the Colonies as he pleased. It is not possible now, for unless the British fleet, in conjunction, if need be, with the Dominion navies,

## THE ROUND TABLE

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is able to overcome the enemy's, the Dominions, in the eyes of the international jurist and of foreign powers, will still be liable to be despoiled by the victor. The safety of the Dominions can be assured in only one of two ways. Either an Imperial Navy, however constituted, must be strong enough to protect them from any probable foe, or if the Empire is not powerful or united enough to provide for its own defence, it must be dissolved and the Dominions must ally themselves, on the cheapest terms they can, with a stronger foreign power. Declarations of neutrality will save neither their honour nor their territories. If they would, every power in the world would be a "neutral" power.

## EGYPT

SOON after Lord Cromer was succeeded by Sir Eldon Gorst as H.B.M.'s Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, the idea became prevalent that the natives of Egypt were to be given a much larger share in the responsibilities of government. The Nationalist party, at that time ably led by Mustapha Kamel, was active and vehement; whether solid or not, it filled the earth with its clamour. Analogies from South Africa, India and Japan were floating in the air. In England the Liberals, containing in their ranks men who had distinguished themselves by their support of the most ultra-Nationalist ideas, were in power. The official view of our position in Egypt had long been that we were educating the Egyptians to govern themselves; surely twenty-five years' training must have produced an effect. Let us, said the authorities, govern more according to Egyptian ideas; that will not undermine our position in Egypt; on the contrary it will strengthen it: in the long run you cannot govern a people against their own wishes. Perhaps the suggestion came from home, perhaps the men on the spot thought the experiment would be acceptable at home. Anyhow so it was done, and the experiment began to be tried.

No country occupies a stranger position in international politics than Egypt. Its present system of government is the result of a long and complicated history. There is hardly one of its most familiar features which can be understood without some knowledge of the past. The Egyptian army, for example, is drilled by British officers in the Turkish language, a tongue spoken neither by officers nor men. The official language of the departments of government is French. Its native ruler bears a title, that of Khedive, unknown elsewhere, and so on through a hundred details. The history of modern Egypt begins with its conquest by Napoleon. He first, with his unrivalled eye for large strategic possibilities, recognized the importance of its geographical

## THE ROUND TABLE

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position, and made it the basis of his grandiose plan for taking Europe in flank by the conquest of Asia. When British arms had expelled the French, Egypt reverted to its position as a province of the Turkish Empire. But the man who succeeded in establishing himself as the Viceroy of the province was no ordinary Turkish official. Mehemet Ali, once a tobacco-seller in Albania, was determined to make himself a second Napoleon. It was his army that held Greece for Turkey, till his fleet was shattered at Navarino. Then he turned his attention to the establishment of an African Empire by the conquest of the Sudan. Next he wrested Syria from his over-lord, and, but for British interference, would have made himself master of Constantinople and the whole Turkish Empire. He established his dynasty in Egypt and changed the whole character of the country by introducing the new system of irrigation, and making possible the cultivation of sugar and cotton.

Twenty years after Mehemet Ali's death, his descendant and successor Ismail, who inherited his far-reaching imagination without his executive capacity, took up his schemes. In every direction he launched out into reckless extravagance. By heavy bribes he obtained firmans from the Sultan conferring on him the title of Khedive, and making it hereditary according to the rule of primogeniture, a custom nearly unknown in the East. Province after province was added to the Egyptian possessions in the Sudan. The consequences of his recklessness and maladministration are well known. They led to Mahdism in the Sudan, to bankruptcy and the revolt of Arabi in Egypt. Scarcely ever had the Egyptian peasant in all his thousands of years of slavery reached such a pitch of oppression as he endured during the reign of Ismail. To him, whatever may have been the feelings of the governing classes, the British occupation which followed the defeat of Arabi was the dawn of unhopd for happiness and prosperity. The British occupation of Egypt appears to the student of history an inevitable development. We had found it necessary to expel Napoleon

## EGYPT

at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the thirties Kinglake had written that "the Englishman, reaching far over to his loved India, will sit in the seats of the faithful," and many travellers and writers had confidently foretold it. Yet when it came, it was, as it were, forced upon us, and it was only after the greatest possible efforts to avoid it that our government finally took up the task.

Thus Egypt, whilst occupied and administered by Great Britain, remains nominally a province of Turkey. And this is not merely a theatrical distinction, as it might be, for instance in the case of Manchuria. In the Turkish Empire the high and mighty Mohammedans had thought it beneath their dignity to trouble about the Christian strangers within their gates and their paltry affairs, and had granted to the different European nations the right of managing their own affairs in questions of law and justice. The treaties by which these privileges were granted, known as the Capitulations, remain in force in all parts of Turkey, and, what was once little but the expression of contemptuous indifference for dogs foredoomed to destruction, has grown into the much prized privilege of exemption from the laws of the land. In Egypt the establishment of the mixed (or international) tribunals has solved to some extent the difficulties of the legal relations between subjects and non-subjects of Turkey so far as civil questions are concerned. But the code is, of course, somewhat antiquated now, and no alteration can be made without the consent of all the sixteen Powers who contributed to set it up. While all foreigners accused of any criminal offence are tried by their own consular courts, it follows that no offence against the laws of Egypt is an offence when committed by a foreigner, unless it is recognized as such by the consular court of the country to which he belongs. As foreigners form, not the most numerous, but far the most active and enterprising portion of the Egyptian community, the obstacles thus created in the way of administration may be imagined.

In theory the government of Egypt is in the hands of the



## THE ROUND TABLE

Khedive, who is a limited despot. He chooses his ministers, and legislates by means of decree. Certain functions of government are performed by International Boards, e.g., the Caisse de la Dette Publique, and new direct taxation has to be agreed to by the General Assembly. Lastly, the sovereign power of the Khedive is limited externally by the suzerainty of Turkey. In practice, however, the Khedive's authority belongs to the British Agent. He exercises his authority directly by what is diplomatically called advice given to the Khedive, and also by his active interference in the details of administration. Each of the principal departments of state Finance, Public Works, Interior, Justice and Education has attached to it an Adviser. These five are the fingers of the hand which the British Agent lays upon the Administration of Egypt. There is no Adviser in the War Office, but the Commander-in-Chief is, of course, an Englishman.

Just as in the Army the majority of the principal officers are Englishmen, so in the Civil Service, many, but not all, of the pivot-posts are held by Englishmen, and among the more subordinate officials there is also a sprinkling of Englishmen training on for more responsible positions. Thus the whole fabric of administration is stiffened, but in many varying degrees in different departments, by the British element. But except in the case of the Advisers, no rule is laid down, in practice or theory, as to what the amount of stiffening shall be, or what particular posts shall be held by Englishmen. Under Lord Cromer a capable native had always the chance of rising high, and could calculate on reaching any position that he was fit for. But capable natives suitable for high and responsible positions were hard to find, and most of the higher positions were filled by Englishmen, especially in the technical departments. In the Interior, however, native administrators have been the rule; there never have been any but native mudirs or governors of provinces: and the Interior has always been, by what is hardly a coincidence, the least

## EGYPT

efficient department. The small body of British officials, at the same time that they are regular servants of the Khedive, forms the special instrument by which H.B.M.'s Consul-General governs. In the background, but vastly important as the source and sanction of his power, is the Army of Occupation.

If Egypt were simply a province in the middle of India, or definitely a part of the Empire, its administration, though not without its own difficulties, would be comparatively a very simple task. But, when many ordinary matters of routine, or what would be so in other countries, become matters of negotiation with the Powers, the case is altered. The Consul-General may always find himself in an international complication over something which could be settled off-hand elsewhere. Worst of all the uncertainty that surrounds our position in the country is apt to produce variations in policy, and breeds difficulties all round. No man is more apt than the Egyptian to ask "Who will be my master?" and trim his sails accordingly; once he knows, he will obey with the ease that arises from millenniums of docility.

The first stage in the experiment was the appointment of a new ministry under Boutros Pasha. Many of the new ministers were decidedly nationalist in politics. It was intimated that these ministers were really going to be responsible heads of departments instead of mere salary-drawing dummies. The Advisers were told that they must treat the opinions of their ministers with more respect, and not merely give them orders in the form of advice. A new Adviser to the Interior was appointed who had the reputation of being more Egyptian than the Egyptians. Some excellent schemes for the formation of municipalities, and provincial councils with some limited but direct powers of administration, which had been long in contemplation were pushed on. High posts in the Civil Service began to be given to natives in succession to Englishmen.

That the experiment was tried in no half-hearted

## THE ROUND TABLE

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fashion is proved by two very salient examples. These examples occurred in very different spheres, but the results were similar, and both are well worth observation by the student of Egyptian politics. They are the affair of the Suez Canal Convention, and the affair of the Cotton worm.

The story of the Suez Canal Convention is not quite fully known in some of its details, but its outlines are sufficiently diverting, and no real harm has been done to any one. Some three years ago, Mr Harvey, the Financial Adviser, casting about for money, had his attention directed to the Suez Canal Company, whose concession comes to an end in about 1968. The year 1908 would seem to be full early to negotiate the renewal of a concession which had still so long to run, but, if the Canal Company were willing to concede terms favourable to Egypt, there was no reason from an Egyptian point of view why the attempt should not be made. It was made, and after two years of laborious and intricate negotiations, Mr Harvey was fortunate enough to arrive at a settlement. In return for an extension of its privileges for another forty years beyond 1968, the Company was to pay over to Egypt a sum of £4,000,000 during the next few years, and concede a certain share in the profits. The terms were certainly fully as favourable as Egypt could have expected to obtain. It is not easy to reckon the value of the Canal sixty years hence, but to pay four millions down (which even at 5 per cent interest is equal to thirty-two millions fifty-six years hence) for a problematical future must be a speculative venture. Even if the conditions of transportation remain the same, Egypt might not be in a position at that date to fulfil its pledges. But such considerations had no weight with the leaders of Nationalist opinion. As soon as the fact of the Convention began to be known a terrific clamour arose in the Nationalist press; the English were selling the future of Egypt to their own profit; the destinies of the country were being mortgaged by the alien oppressor; and the Suez Canal Convention

## EGYPT

became a sort of Shibboleth about which argument was impossible. Meantime, in furtherance of the greater education of Egyptians in self-government, it had been announced that the convention would be submitted to the General Assembly; and that the government would be prepared to abide by its decision.

Who first suggested this unexpected application of the policy of Egypt for the Egyptians must be left to conjecture. Those who are inclined to theorize about the mainsprings of our foreign policy may be divided roughly into three classes, and each class can reasonably read the incident in the light of their favourite view. There is first the joke theory—and surely to those who know their Egypt there never was a more subtly delicious stroke of humour than the reference of this complicated convention to such a body as the General Assembly. Never was a body more ludicrously unfitted to the task thus thrust upon it. The majority of its members are chosen by electoral colleges selected in their turn by so-called universal suffrage. In times of great political excitement and high expenditure as many as 5 per cent of the electors have been known to record their votes. It is in no sense representative of the true feelings of the Egyptian people. Neither by its composition nor its training is it adapted for the comprehension of any but the simplest of issues. Under the Organic Law its only function is to consent to or refuse new direct taxation, and as, since the occupation began, instances of new direct taxation have been rare in the extreme, its opportunities for the development of political wisdom have been few. It would have been just as reasonable to send in these worthy but unlettered rustics for the Cambridge Mathematical tripos, as to expect them to master the details of the convention. When the debate came on, the natural result followed. The arguments of those who opposed were ludicrous in the extreme, but they carried the day, and the convention was rejected with practical unanimity. All Egypt, with the exception, perhaps, of the Financial Adviser, laughed merrily. The Foreign Office

## THE ROUND TABLE

joke, if joke it was intended to be, was played before an appreciative audience. There is great plausibility about the joke theory, but the Foreign Office must be acquitted. Because the results of its action were humorous, it does not follow that any conscious humour was intended.

The second theory is the Machiavellian theory, and this is held almost exclusively by foreigners. In their view the policy of our Foreign Office is dictated by deep-laid plans of the most crafty and far-reaching sagacity. They observe that, over and over again, actions, which appear at the time foolish and inconsequent, turn out in the end to be links in a chain leading to the most profitable and successful results. They argue that there is no better example than the history of this convention. To please the French it was necessary for the British Government to consent to the convention, and this they did through their representatives on the Board of the Canal Company. But it soon became clear that the terms agreed to were very obnoxious to British shippers. The millions to be paid to Egypt would have to be found by somebody, and there was little doubt that the somebody would be the users of the Canal and not the Shareholders. As more than three-fourths of the trade passing through the Canal is British, it was obvious that British trade would be seriously penalized. The happy device of submitting the convention to the General Assembly was an adroit stroke of policy. It was a handsome concession to the principles of Liberalism, as understood by many of the British Government's supporters. It would avert the danger threatening British trade interests, it would further show up in a strong light the perfect incapacity of the Egyptian representatives, and thereby strengthen our position in Egypt. Finally all appearance of bad faith towards the French would be avoided.

The holders of the Machiavellian theory, like those of the joke theory, commit the fallacy of arguing from results to intentions. We must turn to the third or Providential theory for a more correct view of the situation. This is held

## EGYPT

by those who know best our system of government, and the character of those who carry it on at headquarters. They know that far-reaching craft and tenacity of purpose are not characteristic of our rulers, but that they act in the most perfect good-faith, generally innocent of any scheme, good or bad, and often in the most complete ignorance of the situation. They attribute our success in the past to the peculiar care exercised by Providence over the destinies of the British Empire, which directs that one mistake shall be nullified by another, and enables the energy and devotion of our rank and file to counteract the misguided efforts of those in high places. It is wrong to assume as is done by the Machiavellians that, because nearly every man, woman and child in Egypt knew that the Convention would be ignominiously rejected by the General Assembly the heads of the Egyptian Government knew it too. On the contrary it is certain that they believed it would be passed, and so naturally the Foreign Office at home believed. The experiment was tried in good faith by men who believed in the Convention they had made. They did not conceive in the possibility of its rejection. No harm has been done; the Financial Adviser need not even grieve over the loss of the few millions. Last year Egypt had a realized surplus of about £1,500,000 and she can never have any real difficulty in finding money for useful and remunerative public works. Meantime the authorities have been taught a lesson as to the character of the Egyptian and his capacity for intelligent self-government, which will stand them in good stead in the future.

The second notable experiment was the Affair of the Cotton worm. It was carried out on a humbler stage. On the high grounds of diplomacy and international policy the educated or uneducated Egyptian might reasonably be expected to lose his way without being convicted of fundamental incapacity. But this was no matter of the higher mathematics for men who could only count up to ten, but a plain straightforward test relating to the A.B.C. of farming. The cotton worm is the caterpillar of a moth which at



## THE ROUND TABLE

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certain times in the summer lays its eggs in great numbers on the leaves of the young cotton plant. If these eggs are allowed to hatch the worms do the greatest possible damage to the plant. Experience has shown that the best way to combat the pest is to pick off the leaves on which the eggs have been laid and destroy them. This picking is done by children, and it had been usual for the business to be organized in the provinces by British Inspectors under the Ministry of the Interior. Under the new regime it seems to have been thought that the campaign against the worm might properly be left in Egyptian hands. It was argued that surely in a matter so nearly touching their own pockets the natives could be trusted to repeat a lesson already rehearsed. So the English Inspectors were withdrawn, but the Egyptians left to themselves failed to cope with this simple problem of organization. The cotton worm flourished and multiplied exceedingly. Great was the damage, and loud was the outcry of the afflicted land owner. Politics were all very well in their place, but that the sacred cotton crop should be sacrificed to political ideals was really too bad, and quite outside the calculations of the intelligent patriot.

It was of course expected (and indeed openly acknowledged) that the new policy, of which the two experiments mentioned were not isolated instances, would lead to some sacrifice of efficiency. It is exceedingly difficult in Egypt to lay hands on efficient native administrators; if you run through the names of efficient ministers in the past, they are practically certain to be of Turkish, Syrian or Armenian origin. It is one thing to educate the Egyptian, it is another to endow him with the character demanded of the successful administrator. Still a temporary loss of efficiency would have been a small price to pay for the discovery of even a dawning capacity for self-government. The existence of the Nationalist party, so far as it was genuine, was in itself a sign of progress. No foreign power can permanently and successfully administer a people's affairs, if that people are not only willing but also able to do so themselves. This has always



## EGYPT

been the official view, and the new policy differed from the old not so much in direction as in violence of movement. But there was a worse result of the new experiment than mere administrative or legislative incapacity. Unfortunately, instead of being grateful for the concessions made, the average Egyptian chose to interpret them as signs that the British Protectorate was to be withdrawn. Many a careful man thought it only prudent to display sympathy with what seemed likely to be the winning side. In the towns nationalist demonstrations increased in size and violence. Students in the Government schools became seriously affected with indiscipline. In the country districts crimes and outrages increased; brigands began to reappear. Finally these disorders culminated in the assassination of Boutros, the Coptic Prime Minister, by a fanatical Nationalist.

Even before the assassination of Boutros it had become perfectly clear that the new policy was a failure. The signs of the weather began to point to a veering of the political wind, and the Egyptian, always eager to be on the winning side, was quick to shape his conduct accordingly. The words of Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons to the effect that something would have to be done were vague but not on that account the less distressing and harassing to the anxious trimmers. The final execution of the assassin Wardani, and the prosecution of the new Nationalist leader Ferid for a seditious publication, followed by his conviction and sentence to a term of imprisonment (confirmed on appeal), have further cooled the blood of the more ardent. In the election at Zagazig, Abaza Pasha, the leader of the opposition to the Suez Canal Convention, suffered defeat. Above all, in 1910-11 Egypt had a bumper cotton crop. The two previous crops had been comparatively failures, but this last was well over 7,000,000 cantars (1 cantar = about 100 lbs), and with prices averaging over £4 per cantar this means a great accession of wealth to the country. It would not be strange, even if the Egyptian were disposed to be anything of an idealist, which he is not in any degree, that this stream

## THE ROUND TABLE

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of golden sovereigns, for in Egypt it literally is a stream of golden sovereigns, should mitigate the violence of his affection for politics. Not least among the soothing influences has been the strong hand of Mr Graham, lately appointed Adviser to the Interior. At the present moment the nationalist movement seems to have collapsed. It had no real popular backing. No new leader has arisen equal in ability to the late Mustapha Kamel. So once more politics have been relegated to the background, which they always ought to occupy in Egypt. Once in the foreground they do nothing but distract the attention of the Government from the more important work of administration, which perhaps has had a tendency to be neglected during the late season of turmoil.

Beyond a doubt these years have been a severe test of quality for the British officials in Egypt. Perhaps it was necessary for the experiment to be tried in the form it was, but inevitably it caused some feeling of disappointment and disenchantment. Under the new conditions it was impossible that the administrative machine should run as efficiently as before. Men, who saw positions, which had long been the objects of their honourable ambition, given to natives who could not fill them half so well, when they saw themselves and their work misrepresented and vilified in every native print, when among the meanest of time-servers none seemed so mean as not to be able to throw a stone at the Englishman, knowing full well that the brunt of the failure which they could not help would fall upon themselves and their reputation, could hardly be blamed if they were tempted to ask themselves whether, after all, their work was as important as they thought, whether it was really worth while to labour so hard and so conscientiously at the thankless task of making bricks without straw, whether it would not be better simply to let things drift along native-fashion till such time as a pension had been earned, or some other job could be found elsewhere. The real danger was not the actual loss of efficiency itself, though that was hard enough to bear for men trained in the traditions of the 'eighties and

## EGYPT

'nineties, but the loss of enthusiasm in their work by the slender corps of British workers.

It must not be forgotten that for half the year Egypt is a tropical country. The fierce continual sunshine saps the nerve and the energy even of the native born. Without the strong stimulus of pride and joy in their work it is hard for even the best and hardest of workers to continue at pressure during the cruel summer months. But the necessities of government take no heed of climate. The mill must grind continuously, or there will be waste of power. If the European driving-wheels lose their energy, the whole country will suffer. There is no other source of strength. The Egyptian native has a talent for business-like procrastination founded on the most reasonable arguments, and a genius for the avoidance of any decisive action and responsibility. With such influences at work it is easy to subside into a specious *far niente*. Further, the administration of Egypt is no longer in the pioneer stage. Nearly thirty years of progress and increasing prosperity and civilization inevitably tend to blunt the fine spirit of adventure which actuated the men of the early occupation, and which is still to be found in full and vigorous bloom in the Sudan. The growing complication of affairs brings with it routine, and many apparently humdrum matters of detail. It was the glory of the pioneers that they successfully attempted the impossible on a great scale. To-day the glory is less, but the difficulties are the same in principle, if less romantic in appearance. Now, as ever, the task of raising a sound building with bad material and worse tools demands a full measure of ability and patriotism.

It needs more than a casual knowledge of Egypt to realize how creditably the fibre of our fellow-countrymen has stood the strain. Some disappointed grumbling there may be, and anyone unacquainted with the record of work done may be deceived by it. The average Englishman is a man of grim and melancholy humour in the ordinary talk of his leisure hours. He does not change his habit when he

## THE ROUND TABLE

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enters the service of the Khedive. But so far his grumbles, and they are not very serious after all, have made no difference to his work. In action, whether in the office or the field, he is the same cheerful and unwearied enthusiast as ever, however unwilling to admit it. So the crisis has been tided over, and once more the man on the spot has given the authorities the chance to retrieve their mistakes: once more he has taken on his own shoulders the burden and the loss.

Can he not, in the true interests of the Egyptian people, be spared the extra anxieties that come from these fluctuations of high policy? Things may go right for a time, but, it is absolutely certain that the uncertainty of our position in Egypt adds immensely to the difficulties of administration. Certainty of occupation even for twenty-five or thirty years will enormously simplify our task. A glance at the alternatives will prove that nothing else is possible unless we are beaten in a great war.

First, Egypt cannot be independent. Leaving out every other consideration, Egypt depends upon the Nile literally for her very existence; she must, therefore, hold the Sudan securely. Whoever holds the Sudan holds Egypt, for the simple reason that a single dam thrown across the Nile at the right time and in the right place would be the ruin of all the country north of Assouan. But not even the greatest enthusiast for Egypt can maintain for a moment that she is able by herself to hold the Sudan. The attempt would mean relapse to barbarism in the one country and ruin for the other. Therefore Egypt for the Egyptians is impossible. Either we continue to hold the Sudan ourselves and therefore Egypt too, or else some other great power must do so, which we could not permit.

Secondly, no other great Power can be permitted to hold Egypt as long as we are to have any position in the Mediterranean at all. We cannot allow any possible enemy to seat themselves astride of our communications to the East and Australia.

## EGYPT

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The third and only other possible solution is that Egypt should revert to her position as a province of Turkey, and no doubt to many Turks this would seem a very natural and desirable development; the possession of this rich and docile province might well appear an agreeable contrast to the constant effort to control the hardy mountaineers of Albania, or the undisciplined Arabs of the Yemen, who even when subdued can bring no profit to the victor. But, whatever may be the future developments of Turkey as a civilized power and however great the rate of her progress, she has too many problems on her hands to make it possible for her to contemplate the administration of a vast African empire within twenty, thirty, or even forty years.

The simple truth is that now, as ever, the river Nile is the central fact in Egypt, on which everything else must turn. Whoever holds the Upper Nile has Egypt in the hollow of his hand. When the British flag was hoisted in the Sudan we not only secured our position in Egypt but we also undertook responsibilities for the civilization and good government of those vast regions on which we cannot turn our backs. While we hold the Sudan, and we must hold it, we cannot get out of Egypt, even if Egypt ceased to be the stepping-stone to India.

Once we were secure from alarms of evacuation for at least a term of years, it would be possible to pursue a continuous policy, the Egyptians would settle down content to be relieved from the difficulty of discerning who their master was to be, and possibly even the foreigner in the land might cling less closely to his privileges under the Capitulations, which now present so formidable an obstacle in the way of many simple and necessary reforms.

Experience has shown that for the present at least it is hopeless for the Egyptian to try and stand alone. In any case the plant of self-government is a slow-growing tree. No greater cruelty could be inflicted upon the mass of the people, and no greater blow to their interests, than the withdrawal of the strong guiding hand.

## THE ROUND TABLE

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Perhaps it is too much to ask the politician to recognize the logic of these facts, but all the same that logic will doubtless prevail. With the facts on his side, the British official, both in Egypt and the Sudan, may go steadily forward, unaffected by changes of policy, real or rumoured. Let him build his dams and his railways, dig his canals, administer justice, and set his face steadily towards bettering the lot of the toiling millions in his charge. His reward will be that in serving the country of his adoption he is serving his own no less.

PS.—I finished my article, and went out into my garden in Gezireh. As I sat in the warm scented air of the spring night, trying to forecast in what pattern our democracy at home would mould its foreign policy in years to come, the sound of the pipers of the Scots Guards at Kasr-el-Nil floated across the river to my ears. I thought there was much solid comfort and good omen in the sound.

NOTE.—Since the above was written, the death has occurred of Sir Eldon Gorst. He had spent most of his working life in Egypt, and indeed there is little doubt that he owed his breakdown in health to the long years he had passed in the country. This is not the place to discuss his services; it was his tragic fate to be cut off by death just at the moment when he appeared to have passed through the difficulties that must always beset a man who follows a great predecessor in a difficult post.

The news of Lord Kitchener's appointment as his successor has been received with intense satisfaction by all the friends of England in Egypt, as well as the Egyptians themselves.

# BRITISH POLITICS

## THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS.

### I. TWO PRINCIPLES AND A SANCTION.

THREE generations at least of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen have grown up in the belief that the House of Lords has no power to interfere in matters of taxation, and that it has no power to withstand any measure, no matter how profoundly such a measure may affect our existing laws and customs, if the will of the people has been clearly expressed in its favour. The second of these principles does not discriminate. In its view, constitutional change is on the same footing as a land bill or the reform of the poor laws. A general election is the means by which the will of the people is ascertained. It may be a rough and ready test of public feeling; but it is the only one we have ever used, and until little more than a year ago it was held to be sufficient. No other had ever been suggested.

The belief in these two principles has remained undisturbed ever since our grandsires were birched at school. Individuals may have questioned their wisdom or their legality, but all political parties have agreed openly or tacitly to accept them. No party leader has ever thought of disputing their existence any more than a pilot thinks of disputing the existence of the sandbanks of the Solent, or of the rocks which are charted off Belle Isle. There is hardly a statesman whose name is famous in the political history of the last century who has not at one time or another publicly proclaimed, gladly or sorrowfully, his adherence to these principles as part of that marvellous unwritten constitution which it used to be the fashion to describe as the envy and the despair of the civilized world.

Our Constitution has received much praise on the ground that it is to a large extent unwritten. Its want of definiteness has been held to be one of its greatest virtues. Its elasticity has been lauded to the skies as our best protection on



## THE ROUND TABLE

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the one hand against obstinate *laissez faire* and on the other against violent revolution. But an unwritten, indefinite and elastic constitution possesses the defects of its qualities. No one knows who makes it. No one sees when it changes. It grows, but so slowly that no one can mark its growth any more than if it were an oak-tree, which in fact it much resembles. Parliamentary discussions and contests, popular agitations and violence, the inertia and the vigour of Kings, the predominance of this statesman or of that, all have had their shares in its construction. A dramatic event, a purple passage from a speech of one of our great orators, a backstairs' intrigue unsuspected at the time, even a thing so trivial as a phrase which happens to fit some particular occasion and thereby passes current for a generation, may add to, or destroy, or change some important part of our Constitution for good or ill. The learned writers upon constitutional law, although they are read only by serious students, have a power of moulding the tradition co-ordinate with that of the parliamentarians. If not directly, at any rate through their disciples, their conclusions filter down to common men who are ever ready enough to believe what they are told, providing they are not asked to listen to too many reasons in support of the doctrine. Writers who are not particularly learned, but who are brilliant and persuasive, have a great share also in the business. They interpret the popular mood, the aspirations of the particular epoch, and with a touch here and there bring the constitutional picture into sympathy with current notions. Thereafter this picture is stamped firmly on the minds of men. What right or authority it may be asked had Walter Bagehot to make or mend our Constitution? But by one means or another, under the pretext of explaining what it was, he left it in some way different from the thing he found it. Being a man of genius and force of character, his influence made itself felt just as much as if he had been Prime Minister.

And so ideas fraught with the power to transmute pass

## BRITISH POLITICS

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from the study to the schools, the platform, and the press. The principles to which we have alluded have been expounded for years past in the college lecture-room and in the board school alike. The child's history book of England states them dogmatically and without qualification. Bad history perhaps and worse law, but there they are—firmly fixed in the belief of the people! And that surely is the very essence of your unwritten, indefinite, elastic Constitution: it is what the people believe it to be and nothing else. It is just this belief of the people in a loose set of rules, their loyalty to them, their pride in them, that makes our Constitution what it is. And while the Radical may justly admire a dispensation which accords with his generous trust in the popular theory of the State, the Tory must support it with no less fidelity. For the belief of the people in the sanctity of their institutions is the very foundation-stone of Toryism. If you shake that belief there is anarchy—anarchy and at a short interval despotism. Opportunism, levity and passion are always urging us to run the risk of tampering with popular beliefs for the sake of some immediate party advantage, or triumph or revenge. It has been a frequent and deserved reproach against a section of the Radical party in the past, but it must be frankly confessed that in recent times the Tory is open to the same grave charge, and with less excuse, for he has sinned against the light.

There is a third thing which we were also taught at school, but which stands on a somewhat different footing. It is not a principle of the Constitution, but what philosophers call a "sanction," meaning thereby a penalty or form of coercion following upon a serious breach of the rules. The King can create peers, and if the House of Lords refuses to bow to the expressed will of the people, the Government of the day may advise the King to create a sufficient number of peers to carry the measure. The King must do what his Ministers advise, unless he can find other Ministers able to carry on the affairs of the country

## THE ROUND TABLE

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without forcing him to this odious exercise of his powers. The creation of peers is not a part of the Constitutional machinery. It has only once been resorted to 200 years ago and only once threatened since. It is a desperate resource, and any government which forced, or even threatened, it without the most overwhelming necessity would be certain of universal execration, so soon as the immediate shouts of its adherents had died away. It cannot by any straining of words be called a constitutional act, because it temporarily destroys the Constitution by tampering with the independence of one of the Houses of Parliament. It is just as much an act of violence as if the Guards were turned out to expel all peers opposed to the Government. It is an act of violence which falls short of civil war only by a few inches, and which if unjustly used might easily provoke civil war.

For the understanding of the present situation these two principles and this sanction should be clearly kept in mind. The rejection of the Budget in the autumn of 1909, the right of the House of Lords to insist upon amending the Parliament Bill, the threat of Mr Asquith to force the King to create Peers, in order to pass the bill without amendment, must be judged by this light. Amid the cross-fire of arguments of varying degrees of plausibility, only those are really pertinent to the discussion which have reference to these main issues. Did the people approve the Parliament Bill at the election last December? Was Mr Asquith's threat an act of unconstitutional violence or was it justified by a grave necessity?

### II. THE FIRST STAGE—CHRISTMAS TO MID-SUMMER.

**I**N the February number of the ROUND TABLE the constitutional controversy was discussed at some length. There was no further discussion of the subject in the May number for two reasons, the first, that but little change had come

## BRITISH POLITICS

over the scene during the interval of three months, the second, that popular interest in the matter had ceased to be acute. The debates which took place in both Houses of Parliament upon various dates in February, April, and May, failed to excite out-of-doors even that very moderate degree of attention which, in recent years, it has been customary to bestow upon what are termed "first-class" measures. In the Commons, the discussions were tedious and unreal. The indignation on the one side and the enthusiasm on the other produced the effect of make-believe; and although the language used was occasionally strong, the spirit of the debates for the most part was singularly weak. No speech was made which is likely to be remembered in our political annals, nor even a phrase which has any prospect of immortality. Of action, which is more important than speech, there was none. No flash of genius or fortunate inspiration came from any quarter to change the situation. The sole movement was a monotonous goose-step of stale arguments and still staler invective.

For this sterility within Parliament and indifference out of doors the Coronation is commonly held to have been accountable. But it is difficult to believe that the proposal to make so profound a change in our Constitution—a change, or revolution, which is more fitly to be compared with the events of 1688 than with those of 1832—would have been eclipsed by any other form of interest had it been fully understood. That it was not, and is not yet, fully understood must be laid at the doors of the Unionist Party, who, by their tactics, helped to obscure it, and in their speeches failed always to capture the attention of the country.

It is obvious enough that the leading members of Government and Opposition had determined that matters should not be brought to a head until after the Coronation. But this undertaking, if it amounted to an undertaking, laid no duty upon either side to abstain from action in the meanwhile. If the Unionists, who were the defending

## THE ROUND TABLE

party, had felt themselves able to produce an impression upon public opinion either by a new presentment of the danger of Single Chamber Government, or by the advocacy of the Referendum, or in any other way, we may be certain that the attempt would have been made. It was not made; and we cannot resist the conclusion that the reason of this remarkable omission is to be found in the lack of earnestness and conviction which has been the characteristic of Unionist leadership for some years past. Nor did the Liberals in the least strengthen their position. Weariness of abstractions which did not touch any immediate interest of the electors, weariness of politicians who for two years had been crying "wolf," and of other politicians who for a similar period, or longer, had been crying "Millennium," kept the balance even. When nobody is in a mood to listen it is hard to make converts.

The Coronation may certainly be allowed its share in producing this apathy and indifference. The preparations long beforehand, the comings and goings of distinguished guests, the series of impressive ceremonies made demands not merely upon the popular curiosity, but also upon the popular imagination. The prolonged nature of the struggle may also be to some extent accountable. A general election once in a way is a more or less pleasant excitement. Two general elections in a twelvemonth are a tedious superfluity. The worst of a crisis which lasts for two years is that while the danger may be increasing all the time the attention it commands is all the time dying away. But it must be admitted that neither of these reasons fully covers the present case. The main reason is probably to be found in the marked diminution in the interest with which politicians of all parties have come to be regarded since the election of 1906. In many countries—especially in new countries—this phenomenon is not so rare an occurrence as to excite any wonder. But in British politics it has been remarkably rare. From the days of the Reform agitation great abilities, great characters and great causes have always kept firm hold of the popular interest.

## BRITISH POLITICS

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The same may be true of next year or next month, but it has not been true of the past five years. There are always great causes. No cause can be greater than a fundamental change in the Constitution. But the cause is no good without the man. In studies and academies there have always been idealists who sneered impartially at the politicians of both parties; but until recently this has not been the general attitude of the public. To-day there are signs of it on all hands. The papers have discovered that other news is more palatable to their readers. Prominent politicians speak with an ever increasing vigour and emphasis only to find themselves condensed into half a column of small type and consigned ingloriously to a back page. The decadence of parliamentary institutions has become a popular theme; but the institutions are probably much less to blame than what Bacon called "the breed of men."

The events of the Session up to the Coronation may be briefly summarized. Mr Asquith introduced his Parliament Bill into the House of Commons in the third week of February, and the second reading was passed by the end of that month. At the beginning of April (for it was found necessary to devote March to other business of an urgent character) the Bill went into committee, and after debates which took place at intervals up to the end of the month, and which cannot be said to have been unfairly curtailed, the measure was finally reported and sent up to the Lords in the second week of May.

Meanwhile, owing to a series of accidents, fortunate or otherwise, the Lords had not put forward their scheme of reform which it was understood the Unionist leaders had determined to submit as an alternative to the merely destructive proposals of the Government. Ever since Christmas a committee had been actively engaged in preparing a measure of this nature, and on February 23 it was announced that Lord Lansdowne would shortly introduce a Bill in which the policy of the united Unionist party would be set forth. But a very few days later it became obvious

## THE ROUND TABLE

that reform of the House of Lords was not a matter which the rank and file of the party were prepared to leave in the hands of any secret committee of official mandarins. A very large number of the private members had, in fact, conceived plans of their own to which they were attached with a more than maternal affection. The newest recruits, the most youthful members of the party, were even more fertile and more confident than their elders. It was clear from the omens that if Lord Lansdowne had proceeded to introduce his scheme of reform at the date originally proposed a very unseemly exhibition of independence would have ensued among the rank and file both in the Lords and in the Commons.

The first delay was due to this cause. Subsequently, however, when the internal disagreements were more or less satisfactorily composed, Lord Lansdowne was taken ill, and it was not until the second week in May that he was far enough recovered to bring forward his Bill. It was in the same week that the Parliament Bill was sent up from the Commons.

Lord Lansdowne's Reform Bill was debated in the House of Lords at unusual length and was read a second time towards the end of May. It was decided, however, that under the existing conditions, and in view of the hostile attitude of the Government, it would be fruitless waste of time to proceed further with the measure. Possibly it was also felt that to engage in those discussions on matters of detail which the Committee stage invites, might give rise to dissensions which in face of the common enemy it would be wise, if possible, to avoid.

The Parliament Bill of the Government was next considered by their Lordships. It was debated at length on the first and second readings, both of which ordeals it survived safely, though dislike and distrust of its provisions were freely expressed. It was now the end of May. The Coronation was only three weeks ahead and the general atmosphere was quite unfit for serious political discussions. Conse-



## BRITISH POLITICS

quently no fair objection could be taken, or was taken in any responsible quarter, to the decision of the Lords to postpone the Committee Stage until after the Coronation festivities.

The debates in the House of Lords, both upon their own Reform Bill and upon the Parliament Bill, were dignified and courteous—so much might have been expected. They were conducted on a high level, and marked on both sides by serious thought, ability and eloquence. Compared with the debates in the Commons upon the Parliament Bill, the Lords' discussions were creditably distinguished, not merely by good manners, but by an absence of exaggeration. It is claimed for the House of Lords, and claimed truly, that the worst way to secure its attention is to overstate the case. There was little in the nature of overstatement upon this occasion. Moreover, there was a freshness, originality and independence about the speeches of the Peers which were in strong contrast to the stale and jaded debates, following the strictest partisan lines, which had taken place in the lower House a few weeks earlier. It must be remembered, however, in fairness, when we draw this comparison, that every member of the House of Commons had long ago become weary of the subject; for months they had been talking about little else. We must also remember that in the House of Lords independence of view is less to be wondered at, seeing that few Peers are much in awe of the party machine. But, despite the high quality of the debates in the Upper House upon both of these important measures, public opinion in the country, so far as it could be gauged, remained entirely unmoved. The country was not angry; it was not pleased; it was not impressed; it was not even bored, for the very good reason that it never listened. There has never been a more striking instance of the law that causes do not win by themselves; that argument, and reason and virtue pass unheeded if they are not attached and knit up to some striking human character. This need is not a special weakness of the democracy but the common heritage of all

## THE ROUND TABLE

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mankind. An aristocracy is in the same boat in this respect with the mob. "But," it may be answered, "the Lords and the leaders of the Unionist party are men of the highest character." It is not high character that is required, nor yet altogether strong character; far less has it anything to do with the intellect. It is some peculiarity about a man which induces people to see him in the round and not in the flat; a being, possibly very imperfect, but for all that a thing in three dimensions and not merely in two. A few public men have possessed this quality, but the great multitude have lacked it. The why and wherefore we are wholly unable to explain. Gladstone had it, and Disraeli, and Parnell, in a very high degree. And men so extraordinarily different as Bright and Cecil Rhodes and the late Lord Salisbury also had it. Mr Chamberlain had it and has it still; for it is a quality of which the owner, even in silence and sickness, cannot divest himself. But among those who now figure on the stage we can only be certain of one man who as yet has shown that he has it. Mr Lloyd George alone possesses those strange polar qualities of repulsion and attraction which mark out the man to whom people will listen at all times, and whom many people will follow, for no reason which they can give, except simply that they must.

Lord Lansdowne's scheme for the reconstruction of the House of Lords proposed to reduce the existing membership by about one half. It was to consist of 350 Lords of Parliament, of whom 100 were to be elected by the whole body of the Hereditary Peers upon some system of proportional representation, the choice being restricted to such of the number as had served their country, and gained experience of public affairs in one or other of a wide variety of responsible offices. Further, 120 were to be chosen by different districts or divisions of the United Kingdom by means of electoral colleges "composed of the members of the House of Commons for constituencies within each electoral district"; and 100 were to be nominated by the Crown on the advice of the Ministry of the

## BRITISH POLITICS

day. In addition there were to be seven bishops and sixteen judges. Except in the cases of the bishops and the judges the Lords of Parliament were to be elected for a term of twelve years, one fourth of them retiring every third year. The creation of hereditary Peers was to be limited to five per annum, and hereditary Peers who were not chosen to serve in the Upper House were to be eligible for election to the House of Commons.

It was not a very complicated scheme; but when the country is uninterested any scheme appears to be complicated. The country was in no mood to trouble its head about the matter, and no voice which was raised in advocacy of this proposal succeeded in arresting the general attention. The plain man was inclined to say that he could understand a hereditary, or an elected, or a nominated Second Chamber, but that the combination of all three was too much for him. Yet, had the political atmosphere been different, had these proposals been put forward when the Unionists were in power, they would in all probability have appealed very strongly to the common-sense of the nation. For they were reasonable, and in accordance with tradition, and by a few adjustments here and there were capable of being made to give fair play to both political parties. But things being as they were, no enthusiasm was evoked, and it is not too much to say that on the Unionist side as well as on the Radical side they are already well nigh forgotten.

The most remarkable feature, however, of all this period is the obscurity of the Unionist policy in regard to the Parliament Bill. No one knew what the leaders had decided, and the reason of this has recently been made plain—the leaders had not in fact decided anything. From what has happened since it would appear that they held very different views as to the course which ought to be followed in the last resort. The fact that they failed to thresh this difference out and to come to an agreement among themselves before the meeting of Parliament in February last,

## THE ROUND TABLE

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has hampered the action of the party all the way through.

There were two alternatives: the first to accept the result of the election as a verdict by the people in favour of the Parliament Bill; the second to dispute the validity of this election in view of the unprecedented and, it might well have been said, the unconstitutional manner in which this election had been brought about. But neither course was adopted. Everything was left in doubt. No member of the rank and file knew whether in the end the Parliament Bill would be allowed to pass, under protest, in its original form, or whether, after having been amended in accordance with the views of the Unionist party, these amendments would be insisted on. If the election was to be accepted as a clear popular verdict, the right course would have been to say so frankly at the beginning, but at the same time to put forward the alternative policy and to endeavour to persuade the Government to accept as much of it as possible. And had this alternative policy in the meanwhile elicited any support in the country, it is probable that the Government would have been amenable. But if the election had been brought about by trickery and fraud, by the "entrapping" of the King, as has been alleged lately, the right, though violent, course would have been to go on saying so, day in day out. For only on such grounds was it possible to maintain the right of the Peers to set aside the popular verdict. Perhaps the greatest fault of Mr Balfour, as well as a party leader, and as a leader of men, is his passion for that form of circus dexterity which consists in riding upon two horses at the same time. He does it very well indeed, but he never arrives anywhere. The performance indeed is only suited to the ring, where there is soft falling in case of accidents upon the sawdust and tan-bark, and where the end and object in view is merely to go round and round in a circle. It is not practicable for the more serious purposes of war or the chase.

In our own view, howsoever illicit were the means em-

## BRITISH POLITICS

ployed to procure an election, an election, like the certificate of the Court of Bankruptcy, wipes the slate clean. An election is the constitutional means for ascertaining the will of the people with regard to any legislative change, and when this will has been duly ascertained the constitutional practice is to allow the measure which has been so "willed" to pass into law. The only exception would be if it were quite clear that the popular judgement had been changed by the debates which had taken place in the two Houses of Parliament subsequent to the election. And certainly no such change can be said to have occurred in the present instance. We may be wrong in this view; but whether we be wrong or right it is as clear as noonday that the duty and the interest of the Unionist party was to make up its mind which leg it was going to stand upon, and to act accordingly. The failure to do this is one of the chief reasons why the Unionist defence proved so ineffectual. The confusion of opinion among the leaders percolated down to their followers, and the result, as might have been expected, was confusion, not unmingled with irritation, in the country.

### III. THE SECOND STAGE—JULY

**P**UBLIC indifference to the constitutional crisis continued up to the Coronation and somewhat beyond it. The Committee stage of the Parliament Bill in the House of Lords began in the last days of June and the measure was finally "reported" just before the middle of July. It cannot be said that up to this date any interest commensurate to the importance of the proceedings had been shown either among the members of the lower House, or in the Press, or in the country.

The issue between the Government and their opponents may be put into a very few words.

The Parliament Bill laid it down categorically that in future the Lords should not be allowed to touch any Money Bill. Such measures when passed by the Com-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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mons were to become law whether the Lords thought fit to consent or to withhold their consent. This put beyond doubt what most people, prior to 1909, had understood to be the rule of the Constitution. The Lords, upon the advice of Lord Lansdowne, agreed to accept this restraint upon their strict legal rights.

What was or was not a Money Bill, and whether or not any measure purporting to be a Money Bill contained clauses which constituted "tacking," was to be left to the sole decision of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The Lords inserted an amendment to this proposal substituting for the Speaker, as the sole authority, a joint committee representing both Houses and consisting of the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees in the Lords, the Chairman of Ways and Means in the Commons, a Lord of Appeal, and a member of the House of Commons to be appointed by the Speaker. The Speaker was to be the Chairman of the Joint Committee and was to have a casting vote.

Any public bill other than a Money Bill which had passed the House of Commons in three successive sessions whether of the same Parliament or in different Parliaments (providing, however, that two years had elapsed since its first introduction) was to become law whether the House of Lords passed it or rejected it. To this Lord Lansdowne proposed and carried an important amendment, which is the crux of the present dispute. Indeed, it is the only point of difference between the two parties which presented any serious difficulties.

Lord Lansdowne proposed that the Government's plan of dealing with public bills (other than Money Bills) should be modified, and that measures coming under *three* categories should not be capable of being passed over the heads of the Second Chamber in this rough-shod manner, but in case of difference between the two Houses, should be submitted for decision to the people by means of the Referendum. These three categories are (1) bills affecting the existence of the



## BRITISH POLITICS

Crown or the Protestant Succession; (2) bills establishing national parliaments in any parts of the United Kingdom; (3) bills which in the opinion of the joint committee aforesaid raised issues of great gravity upon which the mind of the country had not been sufficiently ascertained.

The Parliament Bill also proposed that the maximum duration of Parliaments should be reduced from seven to five years. To this the House of Lords assented.

Mr. Asquith refused to accept any of the Lords' amendments, and this in spite of the fact that in none of the divisions which took place during the passage of the Bill through Committee was the Government ever supported by much more than half of their normal following in the House of Lords. It is not our purpose to discuss the merits or demerits of Lord Lansdowne's proposals. It is important, however, to point out that at no single point were they open to the charge that they were anti-democratic, either in intention or in effect. The appeal to the people by way of the Referendum may be a good thing or a bad thing; but if it is to be our guiding constitutional principle that the will of the people is to prevail, the Referendum is certainly a swifter, and a more accurate and conclusive way of ascertaining what this "will" is with regard to any particular measure than our present system of a general election, with its confusion of issues and cross-currents of personal considerations. It has been generally assumed that the main, if not the only reason which induced the Government to put aside all attempts at compromise upon the basis of Lord Lansdowne's amendment was Mr Redmond's determination to have Home Rule, and his fear that no Home Rule bill such as he could approve would ever be accepted by the majority of the voters in the United Kingdom! If so, the issue, when we come down to the bedrock of it, was concerned with principles only to a very small extent. It was almost entirely a matter of tactics. Mr Redmond's fear of the result of a Referendum on Home Rule, which may or may not be well grounded, and his



## THE ROUND TABLE

power to turn the Government out at any moment if they agreed to a referendum, constitute the chief explanation of the present remarkable situation. There seems no other valid reason which could have prevented the Government from coming to an agreement with the Opposition, or which could have led Mr Asquith into forcing the King to threaten the most violent exercise of the royal prerogative which has occurred since the days of the Stewarts.\*

Be opinions what they may be as to motives and influences, the gist of the dispute as it has been stated here, will probably be accepted by both parties. Lord Lansdowne's amendments will not strike politicians of any school of thought, who are unconcerned as actors in this particular struggle, as being either anti-democratic or unreasonable. In their nature there is nothing provocative, and there is no taint whatsoever of that stern and unbending Toryism which is alleged against them so freely in our Radical Press. But in spite of their virtues, it must be frankly confessed that they did not evoke any enthusiasm or support, or even much attention, in the country. Whether this was due to the apathy which had been induced by the Coronation, or to the prejudice against the House of Lords which had crystallized at the two recent elections, it is difficult to be certain. Probably one factor which has already been alluded to more than once—the want in the Unionist party of any commanding voice to which the country was willing to listen—had more to do with it than anything else. Many good speeches were made in the House of Lords, but none which had the quality required to make men listen. And it must be added that the method adopted was not wisely chosen with the view to placing the issues clearly before careless or reluctant listeners.

\* It should be added that the Government has throughout expressed their strongest objections, on constitutional grounds, to the root principle of the Lansdowne amendments. In their opinion the referendum would undermine the system of representative government.—Ed.

## BRITISH POLITICS

The speeches were for the most part good, but the issues (in their actual nature simple enough for anyone to comprehend) were lamentably confused during the course of the debates. Lord Lansdowne's were not the only amendments brought forward and discussed, and some of the unofficial proposals were neither very wisely chosen nor very carefully considered. Consequently, the small store of public interest available was not husbanded and made the most of, but was wastefully dissipated on proposals which were entirely inconsistent with the principle of the Bill, which, according to the Radical view, had been accepted when the second reading was agreed to. The suggestions put forward by most distinguished peers were not invariably free from ambiguity. Some were advanced with hesitation, a few broke down under criticism. The public, already weary of the subject, became irritated as well.

The official amendments were, to a very considerable extent, prejudiced and deprived of their natural force by this lackadaisical procedure. But the Peers are independent Britons like the rest of us, and especially upon such an occasion as this, when their immemorial powers were threatened, they could not be prevented from having their say. No considerations of method, nor the obvious advantage of a severe concentration would appear to have had much weight with them. Nor were the official amendments themselves as simple and as free from ambiguity as could have been desired. Every one understood what was meant by a bill which affected the Crown or the Protestant Succession, or which proposed to set up a national parliament in any part of the United Kingdom; but this clear understanding was somewhat clouded by the third category of exceptions—those “issues of great gravity upon which the judgement of the country had not been sufficiently ascertained.” Many people did not understand this provision at all. Many took it to mean much more than it did, and saw in it a sinister design by which the Lords were seeking to gain even more than they gave up, and to retain their right to

## THE ROUND TABLE

pitch Radical measures out-of-window—the fundamental grievance which it had been the special object of the Parliament Bill to remedy. Among many people, not only upon the Ministerial side, who understood quite clearly what was meant, there was considerable distrust of this proposal to set up a Committee consisting of half-a-dozen honest gentlemen with powers to decide over the heads of both Houses, in the first place whether or not any given measure raised an “issue of great gravity,” and in the second place whether or not “the judgement of the country” had already been pronounced upon it. The creation of a committee with such extraordinary powers, would have been quite as much an innovation and quite as startling an innovation as the Referendum itself. As far as the country was concerned the Lords would have had a much better chance of getting their amendments considered and approved had they omitted this vague and dubious proposal, and confined their exceptions to such classes of measures as could be definitely earmarked in advance beyond any chance of dispute.

For all these reasons the Lords’ discussions upon their amendments to the Parliament Bill, which took place at the end of June and during the first half of July, did not produce such an awakening of popular interest as had been confidently expected. Far less did they have the effect of stimulating any movement in the country adverse to the Government. Such bye elections as have taken place recently have marked no serious turnover of votes.

The first thing which can be said to have disturbed the general indifference was, when it became clear that there was a sharp division in the Unionist party to as whether the Lords should stand by their amendments if the Commons rejected them (as the Commons clearly intended to do), or whether it was the constitutional duty of the Lords to acquiesce, under a formal protest, in the will of the people as expressed through their representatives. As soon as it appeared—somewhere in the first week of July—

## BRITISH POLITICS

that there was to be civil war among the Unionists over this subject, the country began to take a mild and somewhat amused interest.

A few days later the man in the street became even more amused and much more interested over the project of a wholesale creation of Peers to carry the Parliament Bill if the House of Lords should refuse to give way. Some newspapers put the creation at fifty, others at five hundred. Had the King consented to this wholesale creation? Would these new noblemen be generally regarded with hatred, derision and contempt, or would they immediately earn the gratitude of all true patriots and the reverence of all true snobs? Would they pay for their titles at the usual rate, or at a reduction in view of the peculiar circumstances? In the former case it was computed by statisticians that the creation of five hundred peers would endow the Radical party fund with twenty-five million sterling, the mere interest of which at five per cent would provide a revenue of £1,250,000 per annum! But above all there was the highly interesting personal question as to who these peers were to be.

This was the beginning of the long-looked-for revival of public interest in the greatest Constitutional change since the reign of King James II. The type of the newspaper headlines now became much bigger. The column of quicksilver could actually be seen climbing the stem of the popular thermometer. When Mr Asquith's letter to Mr Balfour appeared on July 22, and when the public learned therefrom that the King had really consented to make any number of Peers which might be required to overawe the resistance of the House of Lords, the attention at least, if not the moral fervour, of the nation was thoroughly aroused. The transition from wakefulness to excitement and the taking of sides was rapid; so that on Tuesday, July 25, after the noisy and disorderly demonstration by a heroic band of Unionists in the House of Commons, many of our newspapers considered it worth their while to give the "Constitutional Crisis" type almost as large as they were giving to the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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airmen's race round England for the *Daily Mail* prize of £10,000. Some of them even went so far as to put the matter on their bills. Thanks largely to the efforts of the heroic band aforesaid, we have now reached a point when, although the true nature of the Constitutional change which is proposed may be no more clearly understood than it was before, at any rate, owing to the means threatened by the one side to force it through, and those adopted on the other side to withstand it, the Radicals and the Unionists have succeeded between them in collecting a crowd of very respectable dimensions to cheer and jeer.

### POSTSCRIPT. AUGUST 4.

**A**T the time of writing (August 4) we are confronted with a situation which certainly was not foreseen even a few days ago. The Government is at present unaware whether or not the threatened resistance of the House of Lords is substantial enough to justify the creation of peers for the purpose of securing the passage of the Parliament Bill. It may be that no new Peers will be required: it may be that only a few, or it may be that a considerable number will be necessary. Meanwhile there is delay—the motion for disagreeing with the Lords' Amendments was to have been moved last Monday by Mr Asquith in the Commons. Then we heard it was postponed till Wednesday. Now it is put off again until Tuesday of next week.

This development has been caused by a split in the Unionist party—a split which is not due to any disagreement as to the character of the Parliament Bill, but solely to an honest difference of opinion as to the duty of the Unionist party in the peculiar circumstances which have arisen. The great bulk of the Unionists, both in the Lords and in the Commons, hold with Mr Balfour and Lord Lansdowne that, as a consequence of the last general election, it is the duty of the Unionist Peers to bow to the expressed will of the people, and to abstain from insisting

## BRITISH POLITICS

further upon their amendments, seeing that the Government have definitely refused to accept them.

An uncertain number of the Unionist Peers, however, encouraged by a considerable section of the party in the House of Commons, have let it be known that opposition will be offered to the passage of the Bill. The ground taken is that the last election was snatched unfairly and in such a way as to prejudice the issue: that the King was "entrapped" into granting this election (which in the circumstances was entirely without any constitutional precedent) and into giving a promise to create Peers, owing either to the misrepresentations of the Prime Minister or to the suppression and concealment by him of the alternative courses which it was open to the King to follow. As there was trickery, according to the views of this section of the party, the election is not to count. It is not to be taken as the true verdict of the people. The numbers of this section are variously estimated at from fifty to seventy.

Finally, there is a small band of Unionist Peers who feel so strongly that tradition makes it the duty of the House of Lords not to defeat the verdict of the people (no matter how dishonestly or unconstitutionally such a verdict may have been obtained) that they are actually prepared to vote for the Parliament Bill, which they detest, in order that the Constitution may be upheld. The number of these Peers is likewise uncertain, but not more than about half a dozen of them have as yet openly announced their intention of taking this heroic course.

The group which is determined to wage war to the end, and to "die in the last ditch" has been popularly named *the Ditchers*, and the main body which follows Mr Balfour and Lord Lansdowne are known for distinction as *the Hedgers*; while those noble spirits who are prepared to suffer for the faults of others have been called the *Whipping Boys*.

Now it is perfectly obvious to every one but an excited journalist, that each of these three views of the situation is



## THE ROUND TABLE

honestly and disinterestedly held by the great bulk of its supporters, and consequently that none of their opinions is in any way discreditable to the moral characters of the persons who profess it. Nor can it be said with truth that any one of them is on the face of it absurd or contrary to reason. Of course, in all political disturbances, the elements of temper and personal intrigue cannot be entirely excluded, and the present case is no exception to this universal rule. Fundamentally, however, there is no cleavage in the Unionist party upon general principles, but merely upon the particular duty of the moment. The matter is one of patriotism much more than of party. It is desirable that this should be understood, especially overseas, whither the sensational gibe is pretty certain to be cabled, while the commonplace explanation is apt to be omitted. For during the past fortnight or so we have been enduring a storm of gibes and gibberish. What has taken place may perhaps be most aptly compared to a ballet, in which the buffoons of the Unionist press and a small number of distracted politicians have divided themselves into two main bands of coryphées (*Hedgers and Ditchers*), who advance upon one another and retire to the strains of martial music, all the time brandishing their arms over their heads, shaking their fists, and shouting in shrill and angry tones "treachery" and such like words from the one side of the stage, and "cowardice" and eipthets of a similar nature from the other. In the intervals of this stately performance, both chorus and anti-chorus turn from time to time upon the small huddled bevy of *Whipping Boys* and apply to them all the scurrilous epithets which each has endured from the other. It means very little of course, and has effected very little, except a certain loss of temper, which in England is inevitable, quite apart from political crises, when the thermometer goes above 80. With the thermometer rising upon occasions above 90 we may perhaps congratulate ourselves that nothing more regrettable has happened.

To add to the burlesque of the situation, it is now



## BRITISH POLITICS

suspected that something like a third of the Liberal Peers are disaffected to the Bill, that they have conscientious scruples, and will not bind themselves to vote for it. Arithmeticians are therefore busily engaged on every newspaper in the United Kingdom working out sums to prove how many new peers will be needed, making due allowance for those who are sick, or abroad, or who have not taken the oath, or are minors, or who, for any other reason, cannot be counted on in the division lobby.

Meanwhile, Mr. Balfour has given notice of a vote of censure on the Government which he will move next Monday. His object apparently is to dispel the cloud of obscurity which surrounds the means employed with the King when he agreed, in November last, contrary, as it is believed, to all precedents, to grant a General Election; also to ascertain when, and upon what conditions, and under what circumstances, and by what representations, or misrepresentations, "the guarantees" to create Peers were obtained from the King. The result of this enquiry, if it proves successful, should be valuable material for the future historian.

NOTE.—On August 10 the Parliament Bill was passed by the House of Lords by 131 votes to 114—a majority of 17.

# CANADIAN AFFAIRS

## I. CORONATION AND CONFERENCE

**D**URING recent weeks interest in Canada has been divided between the Coronation and the Imperial Conference. As was inevitable, the Coronation developed a significant demonstration of loyalty to the Throne and the Empire. While Canadians divide on political issues in Great Britain very much as the British people themselves divide, they unite in a common devotion to the Monarchy and the Sovereign. Possibly in Canada there is no general intellectual acceptance of the hereditary principle. Canadian Liberals are as belligerent as British Radicals in their attitude towards the House of Lords. It is by no means certain that a very different sentiment prevails amongst the mass of Canadian Conservatives. It is gravely doubtful if we should continue the institution of Monarchy if Canada were ever to separate from the mother country. It is just as doubtful if Canada could be held within the Empire if the Monarchy should ever be extinguished.

The Sovereign is the bond of Empire, the object towards which our devotion flows, the seat and centre of a common tradition and a common patriotism. With the Throne abolished and a party chief as President of a British Republic the party cleavage would run throughout the whole Empire and the Dominions become subject to the leader of a political majority in the British islands. Possibly some other system of selection could be devised and some method of consulting the colonies elaborated, but upon the central figure the benediction of the ages would not descend, while the unifying attachment to a traditional and personal head of the race, which acts with mighty power in all the wide dominions of the King, would lose much of its force and significance.

During more than half a century devotion to the Monarchy has deepened in Canada. There are men and women still living to whom the visit of King Edward to Canada sixty years ago is a cherished memory. A youth of infinite

## CANADIAN AFFAIRS

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charm and intimate friendliness, he made an impression that never has been effaced. He enjoyed the peculiar regard of Canadians throughout all his years of service as Prince of Wales, and as King there was something singularly free and buoyant in our attachment. For Queen Victoria we had a regard which verged upon reverence, and almost spontaneously there has developed the same sober quality and firm esteem in our attitude towards King George and Queen Mary. If the feeling is less intimate than that which we entertained for King Edward it is as sincere and it will be as lasting since it is infallibly rooted in respect and confidence. Almost instinctively a natural loyalty to the Throne has strengthened into an aggressive personal fealty to the Sovereign. Of the fact, by whatever processes it has been established, there was abundant evidence during the Coronation celebrations throughout the Dominion; and whatever problems may face the Empire there is an immense reserve of strength in the firm and stable loyalty of the King's Canadian subjects.

When one comes to consider the deliberations and conclusions of the Imperial Conference it is necessary to speak with a certain reserve. Imperial questions tend to become party questions in Canada. There is a school of Canadian Imperialists who distrust the extreme teachings of Colonial autonomists. They doubt whether absolute self government for the Dominions leads towards separation or consolidation. They believe with Mr Chamberlain that greater unity of the Empire can best be secured by a system of trade preferences. They believe that commercial co-operation is of the essence of modern nationalism and that a preference for colonial products in British markets would stimulate Imperial patriotism. They feel that assimilation of the huge mass of foreign and American immigrants who are coming into the Dominion is a task of enormous magnitude and that a preferential trading relation with the mother country would create a predisposition towards an active political allegiance. They doubt both the efficiency

## THE ROUND TABLE

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and the Imperial value of an independent Canadian navy. They would have frank and open co-operation with the Admiralty and a common fleet under a common command. They believe, in short, both in a commercial union and a political freedom of the Empire, and that the silent unorganized forces which move without conscious purpose towards separation must be resisted by active and aggressive advocacy of an organic union of the Empire.

To all these the Imperial Conference was disappointing. With many of these Sir Wilfrid Laurier is under suspicion. It is true, however, as the Canadian Prime Minister contends, that the Dominion has no grievances within the Empire, that there is no movement for separation, that the deliberate and aggressive assertion of Canadian autonomy involves no positive disloyalty to the Imperial connexion. It must be remembered also that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was in a delicate and difficult position. His Government derives its chief support from the province of Quebec. It is by no means without strength in the other provinces, but with Quebec hostile it could hardly survive. There the Prime Minister is attacked by the French Nationalists as the servile agent of British Imperialists and as the author of a naval policy which sacrifices the autonomy of Canada and commits the Dominion to inevitable participation in all the wars of the Empire. Inspired by something like personal hatred of the leader of the Government, they have grossly misrepresented his naval programme and sought to destroy his ascendancy in Quebec by inflammatory appeals to the passions and prejudices of his compatriots. Only a few months ago they defeated his candidate in a Liberal stronghold and naturally they were hopeful that his course at the Imperial conference would furnish fresh grounds of attack. Assailed on the one hand by the French Nationalists and on the other by the extreme Imperialists, it was certain that Sir Wilfrid Laurier would exercise great caution at the Conference. If he has not satisfied the more active Imperialists, he has disappointed the Nationalists by his unflinching assertion of

## CANADIAN AFFAIRS

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Canadian sovereignty in trade and defence. Nor is there reason to think that he has not expressed the sentiment of the Liberal party of Canada. For a generation colonial self-government has been exalted by Canadian statesmen of all parties and as yet there is a general conviction that in this way lies the unity and security of the Empire. Moreover, as between Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Quebec Nationalists every sincere Canadian Imperialist gives his hand to the Prime Minister.

### II. MR BORDEN IN THE WEST

IN July Mr Borden, leader of the Conservative party, addressed a series of meetings in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Some of his most trusted advisers gravely doubted if the visit to the west could result in advantage to the party. It was believed that the western grain growers were generally and strongly favourable to the Trade Agreement with Washington, and it was understood that they would take advantage of every opportunity to urge their demands upon the Conservative leader. During the winter the leaders of the grain growers movement had established a lobby at Ottawa in support of reciprocity, and had prevailed upon many of the branch associations in the three western provinces to petition for parliamentary ratification of the agreement. They were, therefore, as firmly committed to reciprocity as the Government itself. The united farmers of Alberta have 303 branches and between 10,000 and 11,000 members. The grain growers association of Saskatchewan has 15,000 members and that of Manitoba 12,000 members. The two organizations embrace at least one-fourth of the agriculturists of Western Canada. Their leaders have a genius both for organization and for agitation. Free traders and collectivists they denounce protection as a system of privilege and plunder and assail "the Eastern interests" with picturesque ferocity. In no invidious sense they recall James Whitcomb Riley's favourite orator:

## THE ROUND TABLE

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"Jap Miller down at Martinville's the blamedest feller yit.

When he starts in a-talkin' other folks is apt to quit:  
'Pears like that mouth o' his'n wuzn't made fer nuthin' else

But jes' to argify 'em down and gather in their pelts:  
He'll talk you down on tariff; er he'll talk you down on tax,

And prove the poor man pays 'em all—and them's about the fac's."

Mr Borden first encountered the grain growers at Brandon. As at Ottawa seven or eight months ago they read lengthy and vigorous memorials in support of their various demands. These covered State construction and operation of the Hudson Bay railway, public purchase of the terminal grain elevators, government assistance for the chilled meat industry, a redistribution of constituencies in advance of a general election, ratification of the reciprocity agreement, and free trade with the United States in manufactures not largely exported by Great Britain, an immediate increase of the British preference to 50 per cent, and absolute free trade with Great Britain within a decade. The spokesmen for the grain growers declared that they were willing to be taxed directly to meet public expenditures, but that they objected to taxation for the benefit of private interests. The tariff was not only unjust and oppressive in its operations, but dangerous and insidious in its tendency to corrupt public life and to produce legislation in the interests of privilege as against the interests of the people. It had become a breeding ground for mergers, trusts, and combinations organized to destroy competition, and to fix the prices of protected commodities. Opposed to protection, they sought no preferential treatment of Canadian products in British markets. Favourable to reciprocity they condemned the course of Mr Borden and his associates in resisting ratification of the agreement with Washington.

## CANADIAN AFFAIRS

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In the Conservative leader's answer to these demands there was nothing of evasion or equivocation. Outside of reciprocity he pledged his support to the whole platform of the grain growers. As firmly he opposed the fiscal agreement with the United States, and declared his uncompromising adhesion to a policy of moderate protection for Canada. He argued that moderate duties were necessary to ensure the safety and prosperity of Canadian industries, and to prevent the flight of Canadian workmen to American industrial centres. He would have Canadian raw material manufactured in Canadian factories, and would restrict its export to foreign countries. Only thus should we create a balanced and harmonious civilization with diversified and interlacing interests. He did not believe that we could escape the domination of trusts and mergers by interlocking the Canadian fiscal system with that of the United States. Under reciprocity the milling industry would be transferred to the neighbouring country, and Canadian grain would lose its individuality in the world's markets. Indeed, in the whole range of field production there would cease to be strictly Canadian brands and strictly Canadian products for export. He would maintain the British preference and give additional advantages to British manufactures in Canada, but as an industry in the Dominion was as valuable to the Empire as one in the mother country, he would not deliberately legislate to prejudice the position of Canadian factories. Reciprocal trade preference within the Empire would give us the advantage of trade with countries which require our products and which can offer us commodities that we do not produce, while the proposals of the Government were for reciprocal trade with a country which produces a surplus of nearly every commodity that we produce. He opposed the agreement therefore, because it would destroy the hope of reciprocal trade preferences within the Empire, because its tendency would be to disintegrate the Dominion, to separate the provinces, to check intercourse and commerce between the provinces, and between the



## THE ROUND TABLE

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east and the west, and because if carried to its logical conclusion it would lead to commercial union with the United States, and commercial union would inevitably end in political absorption.

It is admitted that Mr Borden's candour and courage impressed the deputation. But there was nothing else to be said. The Conservative party in Parliament had resolved to oppose reciprocity, and even the best strategy was a bold defence of its attitude. The grain growers would not have been deceived by trimming and vacillation. The industrial communities of the older provinces would have been alienated by an attempt to conciliate western free traders. Mr Borden deliberately made his choice between free traders and protectionists. The tradition of his party is protectionist. Freer trade is the fiscal creed of Canadian Liberalism. Since 1896, however, the Laurier Administration has had the confidence of a great body of protectionists while retaining the support of the free trade element. If reciprocity has done nothing else, it has restored the historical division between the parties and probably the very zeal of the western grain growers in support of the Government will drive many protectionists back into the Conservative party. It is true that the agreement with Washington does not materially affect duties on manufactures, but the industrial interests do not forget that the American negotiators were instructed to go the length of absolute free trade with Canada, nor do they ignore the significance of the alliance between western free traders and the Government.

At very many of Mr Borden's meetings the grain growers reiterated their demands, and towards the close of the tour there was a touch of impatience and anger in their representations. Those features of their platform to which the Conservative leader gave assent were substantially ignored. They made reciprocity the supreme consideration, and if their spokesmen express the general sentiment of the grain growers, this formidable element of the western

## CANADIAN AFFAIRS

population will vote as a body against the candidates of the Conservative party. How far they represent the farmers outside the organizations and to what extent party feeling will operate to the advantage of the Opposition only the actual test of an election can determine. It must be remembered, however, that a considerable percentage of the western people have no settled political affiliations in Canada, that they have no traditional or inherited loyalty to any Canadian party, that they have no clear conception of eastern conditions, and that the grain growers appeal peculiarly and powerfully to all the sectional prejudices and immediate interests of a radical, buoyant, and aggressive agrarian population. There is no evidence that the leaders of the grain growers movement have been affected by Mr Borden's arguments; there is abundant evidence that he has stimulated the spirit of western Conservatives and greatly strengthened the determination of his party to force an appeal to the country on the Trade Agreement.

Saskatchewan already has furnished evidence of the effect of Mr Borden's western meetings. In the Provincial Legislature the Conservative Opposition, under the leadership of Mr F. W. G. Haultain, gave its support to a resolution in favour of reciprocity. For years Mr Haultain was Premier of the Territories. He, more than any other man, laid the foundations and fashioned the structure of its political institutions. He has great strength and popularity throughout the province. Notwithstanding these facts, however, a Provincial Conservative Convention at Moose Jaw, attended by 200 delegates, despite his leadership and authority, has just declared unanimously against reciprocity. Substantially this is a repudiation of Mr Haultain and an endorsement of Mr Borden. It is, moreover, a challenge to the grain growers and a subordination of provincial to national considerations. There may be room for speculation as to how far strictly party influences are responsible for the action of the convention, but at

## THE ROUND TABLE

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least the fact suggests the unity and cohesion of the Conservative party throughout the whole country. It is also beyond question that Mr Borden has enormously improved his personal position. He had never before spoken with so much spirit and power, nor shown such skill, patience, and resource in handling public meetings. No sign of revolt against his leadership remains. He is as heartily accepted by Liberal opponents of reciprocity as by the masses of his own party. This, in itself materially strengthens the campaign against the trade agreement, as it enhances Mr Borden's personal power and prestige. At such centres as Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, and Edmonton, the Conservative meetings were thoroughly successful and generally in the rural communities there was manifested an eager interest in the arguments advanced against the compact with Washington. Invariably there was a satisfactory response to any appeal to national and imperial sentiment, and to every argument for full and energetic co-operation with the mother country in trade and defence. Whatever, therefore, may be the fortune of Conservative candidates in the Western Constituencies, at least the Conservative leader has done something to unify and energize his party and has given a common language and a common platform to Conservatives in all the provinces.

### III. REDISTRIBUTION AND ELECTION.

**I**T is understood that if the Opposition continues to resist ratification of the Reciprocity agreement the Government will appeal to the country in September or October. At the outset the Opposition may not clearly have designed to force a general election. There was some expectation that the American Senate would reject or amend the agreement, and it was resolved to prevent final action at Ottawa until there was definite acceptance or rejection at Washington. But as the argument proceeded in the press and in the constituencies, the Conservative

## CANADIAN AFFAIRS

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politicians convinced themselves that the sound policy in the party interest was to force a general election, and it is certain that they will exhaust every means of parliamentary obstruction in order to effect their purpose. As there is no machinery of closure in Canada, the Government recognizes that it cannot command the situation and, measurably confident that the country will support the agreement, has determined upon dissolution.

It is not even certain that there will be a redistribution of constituencies before the election. Some weeks must yet elapse before the census can be completed, while after the figures are to hand a Bill must be prepared and put through its various stages. Only a Bill entirely acceptable to the Opposition could make rapid progress. Any measure of the nature of a jerrymander would simply give the Opposition an additional ground of obstruction. If, therefore, redistribution is to be accomplished, the Opposition must be consulted on every detail of the measure, and it must be of such a character as to command practically the unanimous support of Parliament. There is reason to think the Government is doubtful if such a Bill can be produced, and will lay upon the Opposition the onus of blocking any readjustment of the representation.

It is significant that ministerial candidates have been nominated in various divisions that are likely to be abolished, and that the preparations of both parties for the contest rest upon the existing electoral adjustment. Moreover, it is doubtful if the Opposition would lose heavily or the Government gain materially by redistribution. Undoubtedly the West is entitled to greater representation. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and the Yukon now have thirty-five members in the House of Commons, eighteen of whom are ministerialists and seventeen Conservatives. It is estimated that an equitable readjustment would give the west fifty-five or sixty members, and no doubt a substantial majority of the new member would be assigned to Saskatchewan and Alberta. On the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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other hand, Winnipeg with 200,000 population and only one representative could fairly claim two or three members, the representation of Vancouver would require to be doubled, and Calgary and Edmonton even if joined to rural municipalities, would have the mass of the voters in their respective divisions. Thus, even in the west the whole advantage would not go to the rural population, while in the east, Montreal and Toronto could not be denied additional representatives, Port Arthur and Port William would control a northern division, and the growth of settlement in the mining country would have to be considered. It is also certain that the operation of the Quebec unit will affect the rural representation of Ontario and the Atlantic provinces, and therefore assuming that the rural communities are favourable to reciprocity and the towns and cities less favourable, any fair redistribution will not materially affect the relative strength of the parties. Possibly the balance of advantage would lie with the Government, but by no means so decisively as has been contended.

Ten years ago the census gave a total population of 5,371,315. It is assumed that the population is now between 7,500,000 and 8,000,000. Apart from the natural increase we have received nearly 2,000,000 immigrants during the ten year period. In Quebec there is both a higher birth rate and a more stay-at-home population. From the French province there has been an inconsiderable migration, while the older counties of Ontario and the Atlantic provinces have been drained to fill up the western country. Under the British North America Act Quebec has a stationary representation of sixty-five members in the House of Commons, and the unit for Quebec determines the representation of all the other provinces. Under the census of 1901 the unit for Quebec was 25,000. It is believed that it will now rise to 30,000. Thus the growth of population in Quebec, combined with the growth of cities, means a relative decline in the political strength of the counties in the old provinces and a

## CANADIAN AFFAIRS

proportionate loss of representation in Parliament. The voting strength of the French population is by no means confined to Quebec. It is estimated that 86 out of the 221 seats in Parliament are practically controlled by the French element. To-day there is a French majority in every county of Quebec. There are 225,000 French Canadians in Ontario, and they are signally influential in fifteen counties. There are 50,000 French in Nova Scotia, 90,000 in New Brunswick, 15,000 in Prince Edward Island and 50,000 in the Western provinces. The old *Rouges* saw "the tomb of the French race and the ruin of Lower Canada" in the terms of Confederation, but more than forty years have brought no serious relative decline of French influence nor any sign of a cohesive English majority.

### IV. CANADA AND FOREIGN POLICY

IT is doubtful if Canada has ever had any conscious sense of responsibility for the security of the Empire. Down to Confederation British regiments were stationed in the country. It was only a year or so ago that we assumed the burden of garrisoning Halifax and Esquimalt. Even Sir John Macdonald and Sir Charles Tupper contended that in building railways, making canals and settling the western provinces we discharged our obligation to the mother country. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has been reluctant to create a navy or to contribute towards sea defence, and it was a sudden and resistless movement of popular feeling which forced the Government to send contingents to South Africa. The demand came from the people, and not from the authorities, and probably a Conservative Government would have behaved exactly as the Laurier Administration did under the circumstances. We have gone on the assumption that we have no foreign relations and therefore no direct interest in the foreign policy of the Empire. We have assumed that Canada could be menaced only from Washington, and there has been a common impression that Great Britain would not

## THE ROUND TABLE

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quarrel with the United States on our account. For more than half a century Canadian exports have had a safe pathway across the seas. This security we have ascribed to the beneficence of Providence or to the world's unconcern in the commercial and political relations of the Dominion. To Great Britain we have felt no acute sense of gratitude or obligation, and we have hardly regarded the British navy as the guarantee of our commercial and national safety. Unconsciously, perhaps, we have assumed that we were outside the zone of international conflict and immune from the dangers which threaten other nations.

As yet we see only dimly that we have relations on the Pacific and that the destruction of the Imperial fleet might imperil our existence as a British community or throw us upon the mercy of Washington. In British Columbia alone is there any such sense of isolation as influences South Africa and the Australian Commonwealth. There is no doubt that feeling on the Pacific coast runs strongly against Asiatic immigration. During the last few years hostility to the Japanese has deepened. It now extends far beyond the ranks of organized labour. There are those who fear that British Columbia is destined to become an industrial province of Japan. Feeling against the Chinese has moderated as they become better understood and as the absolute need of an outside supply of domestic servants has been more clearly recognized. The Governments, however, dare not permit the importation of Asiatics for the work of construction on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, and unquestionably the regulated admission of Japanese under the voluntary agreement with Japan has adversely affected the Laurier Administration in British Columbia. Even with the limited importation now permitted Asiatics are spreading from the coast across the mountains into Alberta. Ten years hence what is now mainly a coast question may become a western question. In proportion as the issue grows in magnitude the Dominion will recognize its responsibilities on the Pacific and its dependence upon the defensive forces of the Empire. Generally



## CANADIAN AFFAIRS

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there is approval of the revised treaty of alliance with Japan. Probably, however, the provision that is most highly regarded is that which anticipates a treaty of arbitration between Great Britain and the United States, and in that event permits the mother country to maintain neutrality in case of war between Japan and the Republic. In some degree the whole movement for arbitration strengthens the indisposition of Canadians to provide for sea defence and confirms the sense of security in which we have rested for two generations.

In the impending electoral contest the naval programme will not be a serious issue outside of Quebec. Even there the question has been less influential since the Trade agreement with Washington was negotiated. In the English provinces there is vigorous assertion of our duty to assist the Empire in any time of crisis. There has been much angry criticism of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's apparent hesitation to agree to intimate consultation with the British Government on details of foreign policy lest the fact should involve us in wars in which we had no immediate interest. But we approach an election, and it is perhaps difficult to distinguish between sober conviction and partisan denunciation. What is certain is that the Canadian people have not yet fully determined their attitude towards Imperial defence nor fully convinced themselves that equal participation in the advantages of the Imperial partnership involves an equal assumption of obligations and responsibilities. Ultimately it will be by shock rather than by argument that the country will realize its true position. To a greater degree than they are willing to admit Canadians depend upon the Monroe doctrine. Is it conceivable that if the doctrine had never been promulgated or if the British navy were not available for our defence that we would trust to the gods to protect our sea-going trade and to maintain our national independence? No one believes that the United States designs to attack Canada, but what is there in the history of the Republic or in that of human institutions to support the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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notion that we can be defended by a foreign power and lose nothing in money, in integrity or in dignity? A nation exists because it has power to exist, but who believes that Canada has such power outside the British Empire? What effective remonstrance could we address to China or Japan? How perilously our trade would go upon the seas! How feebly we would negotiate with any foreign nation! It is vital that the true situation should be revealed and emphasized, alike in the interests of Canada and of the Empire. Until we understand we shall enter the Imperial councils with less authority than we should command, and the whole movement towards the complete unity and consolidation of the Empire will be impeded, not so much by the deliberate design as by the imperfect comprehension and the prudent detachment of the Canadian people.

Canada, July, 1911

# AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

## AUSTRALIA AND THE EMPIRE

THE student alike of Federal and Imperial questions, will find plenty to interest him in the happenings in Australia during the last few months. But in view of the meeting of the Imperial Conference, before reviewing recent events in Australia, it may, perhaps, be of interest briefly to supplement certain remarks made by the writer of the article "The Australian Position" in a recent number of THE ROUND TABLE,\* concerning the present general attitude of the Australian people towards Imperial affairs. It must at once be admitted that a great change has come over public opinion during the last few years. There are many people in Queensland, for instance, who have a vivid recollection of the bitter criticism levelled against the then Premier of that State, Sir Samuel Griffith (now Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia), for his share in bringing about, some twenty years ago, what was contemptuously styled the "Naval Tribute"; an arrangement by which the six Australian colonies, as they then were, agreed to pay a total annual subsidy of £126,000 to the Home Government, in return for the maintenance in these waters of an additional special Australian squadron, consisting of five third-class cruisers and two torpedo gun-boats. Queensland's share in this "tribute," on a population basis, was about £12,000. Those were the days when "Imperialist" was synonymous with "Jingo" as a term of reproach, and a writer or speaker could count upon a sympathetic audience when he declared that "Australia was being dragged into European complications to serve England's own greedy and selfish ends"—"European" complications, since the "portent of the East" had hardly yet appeared above the horizon. It was even hinted that the real reason for the presence of the English warships on our coasts was that they

\* R.T., Feb., pp. 191-3.

## THE ROUND TABLE

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might overawe the people of Australia, should they show any signs of resenting the mother country's insolent overlordship. But now, England's quarrels, England's interests, are ours also, and Queensland, which once grudged the payment of a few thousands of pounds a year to the British Admiralty for its protection, is proud, in common with all the other States, to form part of a Commonwealth which cheerfully faces an expenditure of millions in order to furnish its quota of a great Imperial fleet, and even considers this as only the first instalment of its task. No doubt the people of Australia look upon their ships as primarily designed to protect their own coasts, but the leaders of all political parties in the Commonwealth have made it clear that in case of need they will be available for the defence of the Empire as a whole, wherever their services may be required.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to give a categorical list of all the reasons for this remarkable change of sentiment. Some perhaps, are apparent enough, others lie below the surface, and are not so easily measured or understood. No doubt the South African War (at the close of last century) exercised a powerful influence in this direction. English regular and Australian volunteer fought side by side against a common enemy, and each bore himself as befitted his country and his race. The effect was increased by the fact that even if the Boers had been victorious they could never have invaded either Great Britain or Australia. The attack ostensibly was upon the colonists of the sub-continent, but in reality upon the prestige of the Empire at large, and it was to uphold this that both British and Australian rallied. Another potent factor may be found in the rapid rise during the last few years, of two military and naval powers, Germany and Japan, the one apparently challenging the mother country's supremacy on the sea, and forcing her to concentrate a large proportion of her defensive strength in her own waters; the other a possible menace to white civilization throughout the whole Eastern world. Australia,

## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

virtually an outpost, peopled by a mere handful of Europeans, facing the teeming millions of a newly awakened Asia, cannot close her eyes to the grave peril of isolation, and the absolute need of union with her fellow Europeans of her own race, who will aid her to hold her own.

Of less importance, yet by no means without their influence, have been the, perhaps, rather artificial methods which have been largely resorted to of late for the purpose of fostering a spirit of unity and mutual interest between the different parts of the Empire. The various "Imperial" Leagues, the correspondence societies, the regular salute to the Union Jack practised in many schools; the interchange of flags and courtesies between schools in Australia and Great Britain; the circulation of standard English authors among the younger generation of Australians by means of state aided school libraries; the patriotic numbers of the "school papers" issued for Empire Day by the Education Departments of all the states—all these have played their part, if only a small one, in moulding public opinion as it is in Australia to-day.

But even after allowing for all this, it must in honesty be confessed that speaking generally, the average citizen of the Commonwealth troubles himself very little about Imperial affairs at all. Not infrequently, it is true, with a mental attitude, or perhaps merely a trick of speech derived from an older generation, he speaks of England as "Home," although he himself may never have set foot on its shores. But as a rule the mother country is, after all, a far land, even a foreign land, to the majority at least of the native-born, while Australia is the real "Home," where their work and their interests lie. As for the other Dominions, for the most part they attract little attention, and in some instances only as possible rivals for the trade of the United Kingdom or for the emigrants who year by year leave it to seek new homes across the sea. The Empire is there, certainly, and we are proud of it, loyal to it, in a very real if vague fashion. But, except in the time of some stern crisis, or when some great

## THE ROUND TABLE

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world event, such as the death of the late King Edward, catches at the nation's heart-strings, it is too distant, too formless, to excite any very strong enthusiasm in our minds. What we know as "Imperial Federation," the ideal of a concrete political union between the mother country and the scattered Dominions, may occasionally furnish matter for discussion, more or less academic, in the columns of newspapers and magazines; but these excite, as a rule, only a passing interest, and neither reflect nor influence, to any appreciable extent, the general trend of public thought. The question is not considered as within the present range of practical politics. And not only so, but in so far as it is believed to involve the creation of a central Executive, probably located in London, and charged with the control of the general affairs of Homeland and Dominions alike, it is, perhaps, not too much to say that any small amount of opinion that may exist upon the subject is distinctly inimical to the idea. Australians are very strong Home Rulers—that is, so far as Australia is concerned—and they are apt to look with suspicion upon any proposal which may seem to carry with it any curtailment of their power to govern themselves, or any check, however insignificant, upon the free exercise of the legislative or administrative functions of either Commonwealth or States. But this statement must not be mis-understood. It is not meant to assert that there is in this country no regard for the Empire, no Imperialism, in the true sense of the words. Australian loyalty, as already pointed out, if vague and unformed, is yet very real; we are proud of our Empire, and of our citizenship therein; of the glories, the traditions and the memories in which we, in common with all Britons, have our part.

### THE REFERENDA

**T**URNING now to recent events in the Commonwealth, referred to at the beginning of this article, the first to claim attention is the referendum taken on April 26

## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

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last, upon the Government proposal to make certain amendments in the Constitution Act of 1900—the statute which declares and regulates the political relations between the Federal authority and the States. It may be as well to remind the reader that by the provisions of this Act, any desired alteration in the Constitution, after passing both Houses of the Federal Parliament in the usual way, must be submitted to a referendum, the vote of the whole body of the electors, and to become law, must be approved both by a majority of actual voters and in a majority of the six States.

The questions involved on the present occasion have already been dealt with in a previous article; it is, therefore, unnecessary to do more than repeat that the object of the proposed amendments was to confer largely extended powers upon the central (Federal) Administration with regard to matters relating to trade, commerce, industry—especially industrial disputes—corporations, and monopolies. A special provision was inserted to the effect that the power to control industrial matters should extend to the regulation of wages and conditions upon the railways of the different States—a claim which aroused considerable resentment. (It should be noted that nearly all the railways in Australia have been built and are worked by the State Governments; the Commonwealth itself does not at present own a single mile.) The new powers sought were not necessarily to be acquired at the expense of the States; but the effect, in a large number of instances, would have been to set up a dual jurisdiction; and since it has been clearly laid down that should the two jurisdictions chance to clash, that of the Commonwealth must always prevail, it seemed fairly certain that the rights and powers of the State administrations ran a decided risk of finding themselves, before long, very considerably abridged, should the amendments be approved.

At the beginning of the campaign it was declared by leading men on both sides that it was not desired that the contest should be a party one, but that the voting should



## THE ROUND TABLE

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be upon the merits of the proposals themselves, irrespective of any form of political allegiance. As the fight waxed hot, however, this highly desirable state of affairs was found to be impracticable, and before long the Commonwealth found itself divided upon what were virtually the old party lines, Labour on the one side, Liberals on the other.\* But a marked exception to this rule was found in the attitude taken up by a large section of Labour supporters in New South Wales, where that party at present holds the reins of state government. It should be understood that the working policy of the Labour party in Australia is formulated, not by the Parliamentary leaders, but by a conference of delegates from the various political organizations, which meets at intervals in one or other of the principal cities of the Commonwealth. This Conference, by a majority vote, lays down a "platform," consisting of a number of legislative propositions, or "planks," to each one of which every member of the party must give his adherence, whether he approve of it or not. His only alternative is to resign his membership. With regard to matters upon which the conference has given no directions, it is generally understood that each member is at liberty to act as he may think fit. A large number of New South Wales Labour men, headed by several state ministers, pointed out that the questions to be decided by the referendum were altogether outside the official party platform, and announced their intention of opposing the Federal Government's proposals. This naturally was a serious blow to the Federal party leaders, who thereupon committed the tactical blunder of attempting to silence the malcontents by peremptory orders and threats of future punishment should they persist

\* To avoid misunderstanding, it should be pointed out that the term "Liberal" is frequently used in Australia to denote the whole body of those opposed to the Labour, or Socialist policy; and includes not only persons to whom the name would be given in England, but also many who in that country would be called Conservatives, or even Tories. Compare the names "Republican" and "Democrat," as applied to the great political parties of the United States.

## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

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in their opposition. This action met with very doubtful success; a few of the threatened persons, including Mr Holman, the acting Premier, influenced no doubt by a feeling of loyalty to the party interests as a whole, subsided into a state of quiescence, perhaps more damaging, in the circumstances, than the most voluble activity; others, however, boldly defied the attempted dictation, and continued their part in the campaign. The overwhelming majority—over a hundred thousand, out of a total of between 370,000 and 380,000—recorded in New South Wales against the proposals, would seem to indicate that the adverse feeling aroused in that state by this injudicious action on the part of the Federal Labour leaders far outweighed any possible advantage that might have been gained by the muzzling of a few dangerous critics. A rather unpleasant aftermath of this incident is the announcement, seemingly official, that the labour organizations will shortly consider the advisability of taking steps to punish the recalcitrant members of the party, for voting against the Government. It is to be hoped, when the angry feelings engendered by defeat have in some measure subsided, that wiser and calmer counsels will prevail.

As might have been expected, a great deal of bitterness was imported into the contest, and at times some very exaggerated language was used on both sides. Apart from these defects—inevitable in the circumstances—the campaign was conducted with no small amount of ability, some of the speeches, both for and against the proposals, reaching a distinctly high level. The main argument put forward by Mr Hughes, the Acting Prime Minister of the Commonwealth—upon whose shoulders, in the absence of Mr Fisher, who had left to attend the Coronation ceremonies, fell a large share of the burden of the fight—was that as a result of the interpretation placed by the High Court upon certain clauses of the Constitution, the Federal Parliament found itself unable to enact legislation embodying the distinct will of the people, as expressed at the last general elec-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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tion. It was absolutely necessary, he urged, that these clauses should be amended to allow Parliament to exercise the very powers with which it had been endowed by the Constitution itself. "As a matter of fact," Mr Hughes said in effect, "if the clauses remain as they are, we are practically at an *impasse*. We find it impossible to do the very things which the vote of the people eleven years ago affirmed it to be necessary and right that we should do." On the other hand, Mr Deakin, the Leader of the Opposition, declared that while it was admitted that some changes were required, yet all the powers necessary to enable the Federal Parliament to exercise all its functions to their fullest extent could readily be obtained, without having recourse to the drastic measures proposed by the Administration. He called attention to the fact that during the debate upon the subject in the House of Representatives he had indicated a practical method of dealing with the alleged difficulties, and had offered, on behalf of his party, to co-operate with the Government in passing legislation to that end, but the offer had been refused. Mr Fisher and his friends would have all or nothing. A strong appeal was made by the Government to the growing national spirit in the Commonwealth. "These powers," it was urged—and in many instances, at least, in all sincerity—"are absolutely essential to our stability and progress as a people. Without them, a really united Australia is impossible. Therefore, those who vote against them are mere provincialists, they are not true Federalists, not true Australians." The contrary view—and one which found wide acceptance—was well put by the Leader of the Liberal party in the Senate, in a speech delivered in Brisbane on April 12. "The broad principle," Senator Millen said, "which runs through the whole of the Constitution, a principle which has never been questioned, is the right of each state to manage its own domestic affairs. The Constitution has done more than call into existence a Central National Government—it has reassured to each state its own individuality and rights." And

## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

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it certainly is worthy of grave consideration whether the attempt to place upon the central administration such a multiplicity of duties as would seem to be foreshadowed in the proposals, would not rather tend to weaken the national strength, by disturbing, if not actually overturning, that just balance of powers and rights upon which a true Federation must always depend.

A writer in a recent number of *THE ROUND TABLE* has expended a good deal of ingenuity in an endeavour to cast ridicule upon the use by Liberal speakers and writers of the word "unification." "It is employed," he says, "by a large class of comfortable persons as . . . an abracadabra to exorcise the spirit of Federalism," or—a feat infinitely more astounding than even that of the immortal Mrs. Partington—"as a five-pronged fork to push back the advancing Federal wave." Let it be conceded at once that what he calls the "blessed word" was rather too much in evidence during the campaign. Since it would be difficult to imagine a vigorous political contest without some particular shibboleth being used and re-used *ad nauseum*, the fact ought not to excite very much comment. The Liberals were certainly not alone in the fault, if fault it be. "To be swayed by a word," we are told, "even by one of five syllables, is ignominious." Well, even a word of one syllable can embody a very large idea, and, after all, it should hardly be necessary to point out that it is the idea, and not the mere collocation of letters, which dominates the minds of both speakers and hearers. Two men on opposite sides, Mr Hughes and Mr W. H. Irvine, M.H.R., have both declared that, so far as they are able to judge, the proposed amendments do not make for unification. But, as against this opinion, several of their strongest advocates have openly welcomed them as a decided step in that direction; and others make no secret of their desire to see a single Parliament controlling the whole business of the continent. The absurdity of maintaining, as now, no less than seven distinct legislatures to manage the affairs of less

## THE ROUND TABLE

than five millions of people is a string that has been pretty constantly harped upon during the last few months. And one stalwart Labour supporter boldly assured the electors of a Western Queensland constituency that if the Referenda proposals were carried, he, as their Federal member, would do for them the work then performed by their state representative. Considering these and similar pronouncements, and reflecting on the general circumstances surrounding the measures themselves and the manner in which they were brought before the country, there should not be much occasion for surprise if, as the event showed, a majority of the electors decided to take no risks in this direction.

It is now an old story that the appeal to the people on April 26 resulted in the overwhelming defeat of the Government proposal in five out of the six states, West Australia alone recording an affirmative vote.\* The adverse majority reached a total of a little over a quarter of a million, on a poll of about 1,200,000 electors. Even the most sanguine opponent of the amendments could hardly have anticipated so sweeping a victory. It would be impossible, perhaps, at all events for the present, to arrive at a thoroughly sound comprehension of all the causes underlying this complete and unexpected rout of the Labour forces; still, a few of these may be briefly discussed. Two have been already referred to, the antagonistic feeling aroused by the injudicious attempt to close the mouths of certain dissentient members of the Labour party in New South Wales; and the apprehension that the powers sought by the amendments were merely the first step towards the complete control of all the affairs of the Commonwealth by the central authority alone. A leading King's Counsel, Mr Mitchell, of Victoria, gave it as his opinion, as a constitutional

\* The final returns of the voting on the Referenda are as follow:—

(Number of electors on roll, 2,342,380.)		
Extended Legislative Powers:	Yes	462,412
	No	714,770
Power to nationalize Monopolies:	Yes	464,763
	No	707,017

## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

lawyer, that the effect of an affirmative vote would be to confer upon the Federal Administration the right to regulate every detail of every business, large or small, from one end of Australia to the other. The states of Queensland and Victoria, even now, have good reason to remember the disadvantages under which they laboured in the old days before separation from New South Wales, and the hopeless ineptitude of the central government at Sydney in dealing with the more distant territories. A very strong case indeed would require to be made out before the people of those states would consent to risk the possibility of a return to a similar condition of things with regard to their domestic affairs. "Home Rule" was a popular catchword throughout the campaign.

It must be frankly admitted that there exists, and always has existed, a not inconsiderable section of the community to whom the name "Provincial" may quite fairly be applied; who are so much concerned with their own states that they cannot look outside them, or think in terms of Australia as a whole. There are also many who have always been hostile to the Union, and who look back with regret to the pre-Commonwealth days of independent states. And these have been reinforced by a number of persons who were originally Federalists, but who are now, for one reason or another, dissatisfied with the working of the Constitution to date, and are inclined to believe that the decision of eleven years ago was a mistake. And we must add, too, that large body of citizens which is always opposed to change of any sort. The votes of all these, no doubt, went to swell the total of the "Noes." But perhaps the most potent factor of all in bringing about the defeat of the Government was the widespread feeling that the real questions at issue were not so much political as economic, that the struggle lay, not so much between State rights and Commonwealth rights, as between capital and labour, between employer and employed. Among those who advocated the proposed changes, there were doubtless many in

## THE ROUND TABLE

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whose minds mere party consideration had little or no place, and who were genuinely convinced that the new laws, if carried, would make for a higher ideal of citizenship throughout Australia. But there was also evidence—and evidence derived from the writings and speeches of prominent Labour advocates themselves—which left very little room for doubt that a very strong, if not indeed the principal motive animating the Federal Administration—or rather the Labour party as a whole—was not an aspiration towards a larger and fuller nationhood, but the desire to secure an advantage in the warfare of class against class. New powers were sought, indeed, for the national government, but they were sought because it was hoped that by their means organized Labour would be enabled to strike a staggering blow at those whom its crude economic creed teaches to be its enemies, and to advance a long way on the road towards the Socialistic utopia which is its ultimate goal.

However, be the reasons what they may, the proposals have been defeated, and with a decisiveness which leaves very little doubt as to the opinion of the people of the Commonwealth upon the subject. Mr Hughes, indeed, has intimated—and the intimation has been endorsed by a cable from the Prime Minister, Mr Fisher, who is now in England—that the questions will be submitted to another referendum at the next general election. But much water will flow under the bridges before then, and it is probable that long before the time arrives, Mr Hughes and his friends will have considered the wisdom, or otherwise, of provoking a second battle over the ground upon which they have just experienced so disastrous a defeat.

### THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY

REFERENCE has already been made to the arrival in Australia of the two destroyers "Yarra" and "Parramatta"; these vessels are at present engaged in a sort of triumphal progress along the eastern coast, their reception at



## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

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every port leaving little room for doubt as to the temper of the people of Australia towards the question of national and Imperial defence. But a more significant incident in the brief naval history of the Commonwealth is the launch from a Sydney dockyard on April 4 last, of the destroyer "Warrego," the first ship of war ever built in Australia. The occasion was naturally made one of considerable jubilation, as marking a very distinct advance in the national life, and demonstrating to the world that Australia is preparing herself to be able to furnish, within her own borders, not only the men, but the material for her defence, both by land and by sea.

These three ships, as already stated, are the first of the unit which Australia has undertaken to supply towards the creation of a great Imperial fleet. This unit when complete will comprise one armoured cruiser, three protected cruisers, six destroyers, and three submarines, costing in all about £3,500,000. The annual expenditure for their upkeep is set down at £516,000. Under the original agreement, a certain proportion of the yearly cost was to have been borne by the Imperial authorities, but at the express desire of the Commonwealth Government, this provision has been withdrawn, and the whole burden now falls upon Australia alone.

In an earlier part of this article the statement was made that the Australian people consider the provision of the fleet-unit just described as merely a beginning. Much more they think might and should be done towards the sea-defence of this part of the Empire. Accordingly, a distinguished naval authority, Admiral Henderson, was requested by the Federal Government to furnish a report upon the most practicable method of establishing and maintaining, in Australian waters, a small but efficient fleet, capable of guarding our shores against any ordinary force likely to be brought against us; and which, considering our population and circumstances, would bear favourable comparison with those of other countries. Admiral Henderson accepted the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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task, and his report was made available early in March, 1911. It recommends the construction, during the next twenty-two years, of a fleet, including the unit already authorized, of fifty-two vessels; comprizing eight armoured cruisers, ten protected cruisers, eighteen destroyers, twelve submarines, three depot ships, and one fleet repair ship. This force is to be in two divisions, the Eastern and the Western, the former having its base at Sydney, and the latter at Fremantle (W.A.). Sub-bases are to be established at Thursday Island (Q.) and Port Darwin (North Territory). The chief destroyer bases are to be Brisbane (Q.), Western Port (Vic.) and Fremantle, with sub-bases at Townsville (Q.), Thursday Island, Port Darwin, Albany (W.A.) and Cone Bay (W.A.), while extra bases are also provided for the submarines. The cost of the completed fleet, which will have a *personnel* of about 15,000 officers and men, is estimated at £23,290,000, including the replacing of vessels which may have become obsolete during the twenty-two years over which the construction is spread. The annual expenditure, which as already pointed out, stands at about £516,000 for the authorized unit, is expected to increase by about £85,000 each year until in 1933, when all the proposed vessels will be in commission, it will reach a total of £2,225,000. The scheme also provides for the appointment of a competent Naval Board, to advise the Government and to control the general details of the management of the fleet.

There has been no opportunity as yet of placing Admiral Henderson's report before Parliament. On the whole, the recommendations have been favourably received, although the large amounts of money involved will naturally give occasion for some very hard thinking on the part of those on whose shoulders will fall the burden of finding them. The scheme as it stands will probably undergo some modifications, but, taking into account the strong patriotic sentiment that has been aroused by the idea of possessing a fleet that may be called really Australian, and not merely a part of the Imperial navy, together with the existing

## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

unc easy apprehensions as to the attitude of Japan when the present alliance with Great Britain shall come to an end, it is perhaps fairly safe to predict that it will be adopted in most, if not in all, of its essential features, before many months have passed.

### UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING

**T**URNING now from sea to land defences, we have made what is practically the first attempt within the British dominions, to combine the duty of defence with its privileges of citizenship, by the establishment of a system of compulsory military service. The details of Lord Kitchener's scheme for the effective organizations of the Commonwealth military forces are now well known. To provide for such organization, the Federal Parliament has adopted the principle of the compulsory military training of all boys and men between the ages of twelve and twenty-five years, not physically or mentally incapacitated, who have lived in this country for six months and upwards. In practice, this idea has had to be modified to some extent, since, owing to the great distances between the scattered hamlets and dwellings, it has been found impossible to establish training area over the larger portion of the thinly peopled Western districts, and these must therefore be left out of reckoning, for the present at all events. Taking the scheme in detail, boys between the ages of twelve and fourteen years—junior cadets as they are called—will be engaged in physical culture, drill, gymnastics, walking, running, swimming, and other exercises designed to ensure as far as possible the possession of sound health and vigorous bodies by the time they enter upon their real life as senior cadets. "First aid," and where practicable, miniature rifle shooting will also be taught. The second stage, beginning at fourteen, lasts for four years, during which the cadet is thoroughly drilled in all the first essentials of military duty, so that when he reaches eighteen years of age, it is as no mere raw recruit that he passes into

## THE ROUND TABLE

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the ranks of the citizen forces. He will have been trained, and disciplined, he will know the use of his arms, will be able to march, to shoot, to manœuvre; above all, he will have learnt the meaning of order, obedience, and duty. The real term of service is seven years, making with the junior or preliminary stage, thirteen years of training in all. It should be remembered, however, that at no time during this period will either cadet or soldier necessarily be withdrawn from his ordinary civil avocations. Every one must undergo a certain amount of training, put in so many days under actual military conditions, but for the rest of the time schoolboys will remain at school, workers in the shop, office, factory, or field. The development of the country, the progress of its industries, will go on unchecked, and there will be no danger either of the growth of a military caste, or of the evils which, if report speak true, too often find place in the barrack-life of some of the European armies of to-day.

As yet the arrangements of the Federal military authorities are incomplete, and only one part of the defence scheme, that relating to the senior cadets, has up to the present been put into force. As already stated, something like 150,000 lads, between the ages of fourteen and eighteen years, have now been enrolled throughout the states, and it is exceedingly gratifying to learn that only a very small percentage has been found physically or mentally unfit. Indeed, the generally fine physique of the youngsters has evoked most favourable comment from the examining officers. Some little difficulty, naturally, is being experienced in making a start, but the boys will soon settle down to their work. And, altogether apart from actual military considerations, the training upon which they are now entering cannot but be of the highest value from every point of view, to their country no less than to themselves.

## AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS

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### RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT

MENTION has been made of the state railway systems in connexion with matters of defence. Australia now possesses the greatest railway mileage per head in the world, of which at least ninety per cent is under state ownership and control. Unfortunately, each state initiated its own system, in pre-Federation days, entirely with a view to its own needs, and with little or no regard to what was being done in any of the others. The result is that there are now three different gauges in use; for example, a person travelling, say, from Brisbane to Melbourne—about 1,300 miles—will have to change trains on the New South Wales, and again on the Victorian border, instead of being able to run right through. Inconvenient enough for all ordinary occasions, this state of affairs might very well prove positively disastrous in time of war, when everything might hang upon the facilities for the rapid transport of troops and material from one point to another. In view of this disability, at a recent meeting of the state railway managers, or commissioners, as they are officially styled—who, it should be noted, are members of the War Railway Council—it was resolved to recommend that a uniform gauge be adopted as soon as possible, for the lines connecting the four Eastern capitals—a distance, in all, of about 1,800 miles. The gauge preferred is that now in use in New South Wales, namely, 4 feet 8½ inches, the standard of most of the great railways of Europe and America. This gauge has also been decided upon for the new line to be constructed to join West Australia with the Eastern states. The cost of making the necessary alterations is to be divided between the Commonwealth and the states. This proposal, as stated, only relates to a small portion of the existing lines, but once the beginning is made, it is highly probable that the principle will soon be extended to at least all the main trunk routes throughout the continent. Military considerations have had the greatest share in dictating the suggestion, but

## THE ROUND TABLE

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if carried out the change will enormously benefit trade and commerce as well. For which reason, it is not likely to be much longer delayed.

A great scheme of railway extension, involving the expenditure of millions of pounds and the opening up of thousands of square miles of rich pastoral and agricultural country—the greatest, indeed, ever put forward by any Australian government—has recently been sanctioned by the state Parliament of Queensland.

As penny postage only came into force on the first of the present month, nothing can be said as yet as to its probable results. The Post Office authorities anticipate that for the present, at all events, there will be a considerable loss in revenue. How far this will be obviated by increased correspondence remains to be seen. The probable loss, however, will be faced with equanimity, as there is a general feeling that a step has been taken in the right direction.

A new university, too, has just been established at Brisbane, on a basis which bids fair to make it a powerful intellectual and ethical force in the state in the near future.

These, then, are some of the most important events which have engaged the interest of the people of Australia during the last few months. All these things make for progress and for vigorous national life. It only remains to add that the whole continent continues to enjoy a wide-spread prosperity, perhaps unequalled in any part of its previous history. With every prospect of a good season for the coming year, with the tide of immigration now setting strongly towards her shores, with the construction of hundreds of miles of new railways, and the opening up of millions of fertile acres to the settler, with every form of trade and industry rapidly extending on every hand, the outlook for the Commonwealth of Australia in 1911 is indeed bright, and the spirit of hope and confidence which pervades all classes of the community seems likely to be justified to its fullest extent.

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, May 12, 1911.

# SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

## I. THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

IT cannot be said that the public of South Africa has taken more than a languid interest in the proceedings of the Imperial Conference. Their apathy is partly accounted for by the absence of any effective discussion either in Parliament or on the platform of the principal subjects debated at the Conference, and it may perhaps be excused on the ground that they are still preoccupied with the novelty of their own situation, as citizens no longer of four separate colonies but of a single Dominion, and with the domestic problems which this great constitutional change has brought to the front and presented in a new light.

The Conference has, however, received a good deal of attention from the Press, and in some of the English papers there has been a tendency to condemn it as a failure and to pooh-pooh the optimistic view of the results attained which has been expressed by Mr Asquith and the Dominion Prime Ministers. These papers are, perhaps, inclined to exaggerate the disappointment with which the negative decisions of the Conference on some of the larger proposals submitted have been received. Few people in South Africa ever expected, for instance, that this Conference would accept any concrete proposal for constitutional change, such as that put forward by Sir Joseph Ward for the establishment of an Imperial Council as a permanent body. The majority of those who have given any thought to the subject are disposed to admit that a fuller realization on the part of the peoples, both of the United Kingdom and of the Dominions, of the necessity of united action in such matters as defence and foreign policy must precede the creation of new constitutional machinery.

It is generally recognised that on the side of positive results the great achievement of the Conference has been to put the Dominions into a new relation with the mother country in as far as the conduct of foreign affairs is



## THE ROUND TABLE

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concerned. The admission of the Oversea Ministers to the deliberations of the Imperial Defence Committee is the incident which has most impressed the popular imagination. It is probably the one fact in connexion with the Conference which will sink deep into the mind of the man in the street, and the man on the farm. The *Volkstem*, which is the leading Government organ in the Transvaal (written entirely in Dutch and circulating mainly in the country districts) laid great stress on this meeting, and bade its readers look forward to receiving from General Botha on his return an account of how South Africa is affected by the situation as there expounded. General Botha has already told the people of South Africa, through a message given to a Press representative, what is the general impression which the meeting left on his mind. He said just after the first meeting of the Imperial Defence Committee at which he was present:

"I am profoundly impressed with the confidence shown by the Imperial Government in freely laying before us the problems of foreign policy as they may affect the Dominions. This of itself is a most important step in the growth of Imperial relations and is in reality the beginning of a new era in the history of the Empire. For the first time we now realize in a way we could not before the questions which occupy the attentions of the Home Government, and in what way and to what extent they influence the outlying parts of the Empire."

The resolution subsequently passed by the Conference, which establishes the principle that the Dominions are in future to be consulted during the preparatory as well as the final stage of negotiations leading to international agreements, confirms the belief that General Botha did not overestimate the importance of the precedent created by the Imperial Government's action in confiding to the Oversea Ministers the problems of the Empire's foreign policy, and that in Mr Fisher's words this action is "a step which once taken cannot be retraced." Mr Fisher's further resolution

## SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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affirming the desirability of an exchange of visits between the Ministers of the United Kingdom and of the Dominions suggests a machinery by which the closeness of touch between the different governments on questions affecting the external relations of the Empire may be maintained. We can hardly expect the British Foreign Secretary to visit South Africa for the purpose of explaining the international situation to the Union Cabinet, but there seems no reason why the South African Minister to whom the care of the Union's external affairs is committed should not pay periodical visits to London in order to confer with the Foreign Office.

The fact that the Union Ministry will henceforth be entitled to be consulted throughout the course of international negotiations which may affect South Africa, and will therefore be responsible for formulating the views of South Africa on such negotiations, will make an immense difference to the character of future discussions in Parliament on external affairs and their bearing on the problems of defence. Parliamentary debates on subjects for which the Ministry of the day can disown responsibility, and of which they have no first-hand knowledge, are apt to have an air of unreality and to take no hold on public attention. This was experienced in the Union Parliament during last session, when an attempt was made by the Opposition to raise a debate on the Declaration of London. Mr Smuts, the Minister of Defence, shrugged his shoulders and intimated that the subject was so difficult and obscure, and had been so thoroughly thrashed out in England, that the Union Parliament could not hope to do any good by discussing it. It will be impossible in future for a Minister of Defence to give a like answer when a similar subject is raised. The Union Cabinet will have to formulate a policy on such subjects and to convince Parliament that it is the right policy. Thus the knowledge of these far away matters, on the right conduct of which the safety of South Africa ultimately depends, will filter downwards from the Ministry to Parliament, and from Parliament to the party caucus

## THE ROUND TABLE

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and the electorate. And a process of education will be set on foot which will gradually create in South Africa, what we are far from having to-day, an educated and informed public opinion on the external relations of the Empire as they affect South Africa. The creation of such an opinion is a necessary preliminary to the assumption by South Africa of its proportionate share of the burden of Imperial defence.

### II. THE OPTION OF NEUTRALITY IN WAR.

THERE has been abundance of comment in the South African Press on Sir Wilfrid Laurier's contribution to the Conference discussion about consulting the Dominions with regard to international negotiations, and especially on his remark that "If a Dominion insisted on being consulted in regard to matters which might result in war, that would imply the necessity that they should take part in the war." There is, of course, nothing novel in the theory of the Canadian position which is thus implied, namely the theory that Canada has at present a free choice as to whether or not it will consent to be involved in an Imperial war—but this particular remark has been more widely published than Sir Wilfrid Laurier's similar utterances in the Canadian Parliament, and has impressed people here more, just because in this case the theory was made the ground of an objection to the claim put forward by the other Dominions to be consulted as to international negotiations.

There ought not to be much risk of a similar theory finding acceptance in South Africa. The geographical situation of the Union, the possession of frontiers which march with those of two European powers, of ports which are stations of call on the highways of the world's commerce and of a strategic position so coveted as the Cape peninsula, coupled with the obvious fact of the Union's dependence on its oversea trade, ought to convince South Africans that it is impossible for them to stand aside as mere

## SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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spectators from any conflict with a civilized power in which the Empire might become involved. A point of view similar to that of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's finds expression, however, in a leading article on "South Africa's Neutrality" which appeared in a recent issue of the *Volkstem*. The writer discusses the terms of the Union constitution, and comes to the conclusion that, as the Governor General in exercising the control of the Union forces, which is entrusted to him as the King's representative, must be guided by the advice of his ministers, it is quite wrong to suppose that in the event of England making war, the Union, as a self-governing British state, automatically becomes involved in that war. "An express declaration or act of the different Colonial Governments is essential before the neutrality of any of them can be disturbed." After laying down this curious constitutional doctrine, the article proceeds to picture conditions under which a Dominion might best serve not only its own interests, but also those of the Empire by maintaining neutrality in a war in which England was involved. Neutrality would, it is asserted,

"render the Colony immune from the attacks of the enemy, and would remove the necessity for England to protect the Colony with ships or troops."

This assumption having been made, the special conditions of South Africa are discussed as follows:

"South Africa will in the case of a great war occupy a specially important strategic position, because it may be expected that the Suez Canal will be made impassable, and thus the world's traffic will resume its old route via Cape Agulhas. If now England is one of the belligerent powers, and British South Africa is bound to declare itself as England's ally, a considerable portion of the British fleet will have to be concentrated in South African waters for the protection of the sea coast and the defence of the harbours and the communications of South Africa with the outside world. South Africa will

## THE ROUND TABLE

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be constantly exposed to attacks from England's enemies, and if the German Empire is included among those enemies South Africa will have to hold its military forces in readiness for a land war as well as for the defence of its own harbours. Now it is known that England's tactics at sea will be directed to the concentration of its fleet in European waters, and it is by no means a secret that in time of a great war the daughter overseas states of England must not reckon on coast protection by England. Under those circumstances it might be that England, as well as South Africa, would benefit by South Africa's neutrality."

In embarking on these speculations the writer of the article does not seem to have reflected on the probability that Great Britain's enemies might refuse to recognize a neutrality which would certainly be a novelty in international law, and which, on his own showing, would be so greatly to the advantage both of Great Britain and the Empire. But, putting this difficulty on one side, the article suggests a curious picture. Great Britain is, we are to suppose, at war: the Governor-General, on the advice of the Union Ministry of the day, not only abstains from any offer of active assistance, but demands that the Union of South Africa shall be treated as a neutral power; South African ports, including the naval station at Simonstown, become neutral ports: Great Britain is thereby deprived of the use of her naval base in South African waters on which she has expended millions of the British taxpayers' money; she is, however, compensated for this temporary convenience by the fact that her enemies cannot touch that naval base or the stores which it contains, and that South Africa's coasts and shipping are rendered immune from hostile attack. These ingenuous speculations are symptoms of the confusion of thought which at present exists in South Africa as to the responsibilities of the Union as a self-governing state, which is also a portion of the British Empire. Their appearance in such a paper as the *Volkstem* shows the need

## SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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of that process of education to which I referred just now. There are, however, other writers in the South African Press who do not share the delusive dream of the *Volkstem*, and I may, perhaps, be allowed to balance the quotations already given by the following extract from an article in the *Cape Times*, in which Sir Wilfrid Laurier's doctrine of "optional neutrality" was vigorously criticized.

"The doctrine is worth some little examination. From a constitutional point of view it is clearly unsound. It is not the Parliament of Great Britain which makes war. It is the King, as the symbol of the unity of the Empire. And it is to the King that every Prime Minister and every member of Parliament throughout the Dominions swears the oath of allegiance. The present Chief Justice of South Africa has laid down the constitutional principle in the clearest and most emphatic language. Referring to 'the powers and duties of a Cape Ministry in case of war,' he wrote on July 31, 1899: 'They are Ministers of the Crown, and it will be their duty to afford every possible assistance to the British Government. Under normal conditions a responsible Ministry is perfectly independent in matters of internal concern, but in case of war they are bound to place all the resources of the Colony at the disposal of the British Crown.' And if this were not so, the doctrine of optional neutrality would operate disastrously in two directions. The serious danger is not so much that a power at war with England would refuse to recognize the declared neutrality of a British Dominion, as that for political purposes it would snatch at the opportunity of arriving at a prior understanding with a potentially neutral Dominion—an understanding which might or might not be observed at the will of the belligerent power if victorious. The other danger of such a doctrine is based on self interest. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has been one of the most eloquent and powerful supporters of the principle of constitutional equality as between the Mother Country and the Dominion Governments. If that principle be allied with the principle of

## THE ROUND TABLE

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optional neutrality, the Mother Country might equally with the Dominions claim the right of optional neutrality if an affront were offered to one of the Dominions by a foreign power."

### III. LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION.

IN the last days of the session the House of Assembly, on the motion of the Government, adopted the majority report of the Select Committee on Education without a division and almost without debate. On behalf of the Government both the Minister of Education and the Prime Minister declared that they adopted the recommendations of the majority report. That does not of itself ensure that these recommendations will be given effect to in the schools of the country, because under the Act of Union, elementary education is committed to the charge of the Provincial Councils for a period of five years, and though constitutionally the provinces have no exclusive jurisdiction, no one was prepared at this stage in the history of the Union to advocate that the Union Parliament should seek to override the powers of the provinces in regard to education of all things. All that could be done therefore by the Union Government was to recommend to the provincial authorities the adoption of the principle of the majority report, and this they undertook to do.

It may be as well to recall here the circumstances which gave rise to the appointment of the Select Committee. The Committee was appointed as the result of a debate in the House on the alleged grievances of the English speaking parents in the Free State against the Education Acts passed by the late Parliament of the province, making compulsory the use of both languages as media of instruction. These Acts were defended by the Government party on the ground that they secured equality as between the two languages in accordance with the terms of the constitution. That they provide for equality of treatment as between the two languages has never been denied. Indeed, he



## SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Select Committee found that of all the four provinces, the laws of the Free State alone disclosed no inequality as between the two languages in regard to education. The Opposition, however, contended that the equality laid down by the Act of Union was intended to be secured, not by compelling every parent to have his child educated in and through the medium of both languages, but by giving to all parents equal freedom to have their children educated in and through the medium of either or both as they might think fit. Accordingly the Select Committee was appointed (to quote the words of the Order of the House of Assembly)

“with a view to ensuring in regard to the system of public education throughout the Union the due application of the principles of freedom and equality laid down in Article 137 of the South Africa Act.”

The Committee was directed to examine the educational systems of the four provinces with a view to ascertaining whether they were in harmony with Article 137, and whether they involved any compulsion in regard to the teaching or use as medium of instruction of either the English or the Dutch language. It is clear from the reference that mere equality as between the two languages was not regarded as a sufficient fulfilment of Article 137 of the Act of Union, but that compulsion in regard to the use of either language as a subject or as medium of instruction was also to be removed as far as possible in order to bring the various systems into harmony with the Act of Union.

The Committee presented a report adopted by seven of its eight members. A minority report was presented by the eighth member, General Beyers. Mr Fremantle also signed the minority report, but his signature was deleted by order of the Speaker on the ground that having voted for the majority report it was not in order for him afterwards to present a dissenting report. General Hertzog, who also voted for the majority report, put in a reservation at the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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last meeting of the committee, declaring that while adhering to the majority report he would not support it or advocate its adoption except in so far as it was in accordance with the recommendations of the minority report of General Beyers. These facts are important in considering what is the value of the report as a settlement of the controversy over the language question in the schools, and the probability of its being adopted in practice by the various provinces.

Neither of the two reports recommends a system of compulsory bilingual education. The majority report recommends that up to and including Standard IV, the home language of the child should be taught as a subject and used as the medium of instruction, the other language being also taught and used if the parent so desires. After Standard IV either language or both are to be taught as subjects, and used as media of instruction according to the desire of the parents. Teachers are to be free to qualify in either language.

The minority report recommends that the home language of the child should be taught as a subject and used as the medium of instruction throughout its school course, but the other language is also to be taught and used as a medium unless the parent objects. Teachers are to be required to qualify in both languages.

These are the main points of difference between the two reports. The minority report allows no freedom of choice to the parent as regards the home language, but it allows him to object to the other being used either as a subject or a medium of instruction. The majority report while prescribing the use of the home language during the first four standards, leaves the parent free afterwards to choose as between the two. It also enables teachers whose work may be such as to involve the use of one only of the two languages to avoid the labour of qualifying in the other. It remains to consider what has been done or is likely to be done to give practical effect to their recommendations.

## SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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Although the majority report was voted for by seven of the eight members of the Committee, one of them as we have seen desired at the same time to sign the minority report, while another (General Hertzog) by his reservations recorded at the last sitting of the Committee practically withdrew his adhesion to the majority report in so far as it differed from the other. In the House the Government, of which General Hertzog is a member, announced their adoption of the majority report, and this was approved by the House with one dissenting voice and without a division. Of the provincial executives, that of the Transvaal only has decided to give effect to the recommendations of the majority report, and a draft ordinance is to be introduced during the present session of the Provincial Council with that object. In that province, the law governing public education was passed by the late Parliament by agreement between both parties. In practice it has worked without any serious friction, but objections have been raised to it because in certain respects it treats English as the principal language and Dutch as a subsidiary. This it is now proposed to remedy by amending the law in accordance with the majority report of the Select Committee. In the Orange Free State as we have said, the existing education law gave rise to a bitter agitation against the compulsory use of both languages as media of instruction. In that province the executive committee had decided to adopt a policy of "wait and see," i.e., it has decided not to move in the direction of adopting the recommendations of the Select Committee's report till it sees whether they are to be adopted in the other provinces. The Cape and Natal have as yet taken no action.

This question of the use of the two languages in the schools has given rise to a remarkable duality of policy in the Nationalist party, and even within the Government itself. General Botha has taken some credit to himself and his Government for having effected an educational "settlement," and we presume that he means to refer to the

## THE ROUND TABLE

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majority report of the Committee, since both he himself and the Minister of Education stated in the House that the Government adopted the majority report. On the other hand, General Hertzog (also a Minister) openly advocates the minority report, and in this he is supported outside the cabinet by men like ex-President Steyn and General Beyers. The same duality of policy is apparent on the question of immigration. Certain members of the cabinet, such as General Botha and General Smuts say that a well considered policy of encouraging immigration is a crying need for South Africa. On the other hand, General Hertzog declares that it will be the ruin of the country to bring in a population from oversea. General Botha's task hitherto has been to keep together as one, a cabinet whose members appeal to two widely different sections of the people, but it is evident that it is not becoming easier with time.

South Africa, July, 1911.

# NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

## THE JAPANESE IN THE PACIFIC.

NOTHING that has happened during the last three months has done more to arouse in New Zealand a sense of their Imperial responsibilities than the activity of the Japanese in various parts of the Pacific. People in England can scarcely realize the attitude of New Zealand and Australia towards the coloured races. England with its dense population has little to fear from Japanese aspirations in the Pacific except loss of trade. But to the New Zealander and the Australian, with the teeming millions of China and Japan at their very doors, the danger is very real. New Zealand with its great and varied resources and its genial climate could maintain 10,000,000 white people in a high state of comfort, yet her population is scarcely more than one million. The question that is beginning to exercise the minds of all thoughtful New Zealanders is whether we are going to be left in peaceful possession of our heritage; whether 5,000,000 Australians are enough to hold a fertile continent of 3,000,000 square miles. The recent activity of the Japanese in Hawaii, on the Pacific coast of North America, and more recently in New Caledonia has brought this question into great prominence. Though no one anticipates any immediate danger, there is a growing feeling that we must realize our responsibilities and contribute our fair share towards the maintenance in the Pacific of a fleet capable of coping successfully with any contingency that may arise.

To understand the nature of the peaceful invasion by which the Japanese are becoming the predominant power in several islands of the Pacific with great strategic possibilities, it would be as well to give a brief review of what has happened in the Hawaii Islands since the annexation of that group by the United States. A reciprocal treaty between the former native government and Washington led to the development of the sugar industry in the Islands.

## THE ROUND TABLE

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The American capitalists who had invested millions in Hawaiian sugar plantations naturally looked about for cheap labour. The native Hawaiians were too lazy, so it became necessary to import labour from abroad. Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese were all tried; but the latter proved in every respect the most satisfactory. Consequently Japanese were poured into the territory in such numbers that they are now the dominant people. A few statistics will make the position clear. According to the census of 1900, out of a population of 154,000 there were 61,115 Japanese, 7,283 Americans, 2,884 British and Germans, 37,635 Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians, 25,762 Chinese, 15,675 Portuguese, and 3,646 other foreigners. It is estimated that the present population is about 240,000 of whom at least one-third are Japanese. The Japanese, too, are the most prolific of the inhabitants: of the 4,593 children born in the year ending June 30, 1909, 2,445 were Japanese. The Japanese born on the islands have all the rights of American citizenship. It is estimated that at the present rate of increase there will be within the next twenty years at least 10,000 Japanese voters on the islands. Thus there is every likelihood of the decadent and fast-disappearing Hawaiians being superseded by this more energetic and virile race from the East. The more immediate danger to America arises from the fact that there are already in the islands twenty to thirty thousand trained Japanese soldiers, who, in the event of an outbreak of war between Japan and the United States, could conquer the territory from within. As Hawaii is only 2,000 miles from California its importance to Japan as a naval base cannot be over-estimated.

The presence of the Japanese in the Hawaiian Islands has brought about, too, a social revolution. The Japanese control the retail trade of the islands, and as a natural consequence are beginning to monopolise the wholesale trade also. As they sell cheaper than the Americans and the English, the time is not far distant when the . . . white trader will be driven completely out of business. They have

## NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

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their own doctors, their own schools, their own newspapers, their own temples, and their own theatres. White parents are beginning to realize that it would be impossible for their children to enter into competition with the Japanese without sinking to their level of comfort. Hence, in the near future, all the better-class English, Americans, and Germans will have departed, for, as one observant writer has said: "The Japanese are in Hawaii to stay and possess the land, peacefully or otherwise; and not even the millions of dollars that Uncle Sam is spending at Pearl Harbour, near Honolulu, can prevent the complete Japanisation of the paradise of the Pacific."

The success that has attended the Japanese exploitation of Hawaii is likely to be repeated in New Caledonia. This island, which is only 800 miles east of Australia and about 1,000 miles to the north of New Zealand, is from a strategic point of view, even more important to these two countries than are the Hawaii Islands to the United States. The island has been in the possession of France since 1850; but as only those countries with a large birth-rate have any need to think imperially, no effort has been made to people it with good and hardy settlers. For many years it was a convict settlement, and more recently companies have been formed to work its rich and extensive mineral deposits. The most important of these is la Société Nickel. Like the sugar planters in Hawaii this company wants to pay big dividends: hence, it requires cheap labour. Like the planters in Hawaii too it recognises the industrial qualities of the Japanese, and has already imported 2,000 labourers belonging to that race. The announcement of their arrival aroused so much interest in New Zealand that the *New Zealand Herald* sent a special commissioner to New Caledonia. He has travelled all over the island, conversed with all sorts and conditions of people, and has given the results of his observations in five special articles. He found that 2,000 Japanese have already landed in the island, that 2,300 are coming within the next twelve



## THE ROUND TABLE

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months, that the majority are not coolies, but skilled workmen—engineers, bridge-builders, masons, carpenters—and that nearly all fought in the Russo-Japanese war. Even the French Governor admits the presence of Japanese spies. Recently complaints were made that Japanese were trepang-fishing in prohibited waters. Two of their boats were subsequently captured at Noumea, the capital of the island. They were fined £200 each, or in default their boats were to be confiscated. The fines were immediately paid. Subsequent inquiries proved, according to the commissioner, that these ostensible fishermen were in reality Japanese spies who had previously been taking soundings along the Barrier Reef off the coast of Queensland. The Japanese have been showing a similar avidity for useful knowledge in all parts of the island, and have been especially active in exploring a vast coal-field which is situated in the South-west of New Caledonia. The inference drawn, is that information is being collected and forwarded to Tokio for the preparation of charts and ordnance maps of the island. When we remember that the approach to Noumea is unusually difficult to navigate and that the coast of the island is one of the most treacherous in the world, we can realize how valuable such information would be if Japan decided to make Noumea her naval base in the South Pacific.

The writer of the articles referred to, gives a number of reasons for his contention that Japan intends ultimately to overrun New Caledonia just as she has become the virtual mistress of Hawaii. Among them are the following:

(1) She has no good naval base in the Pacific outside her own land.

(2) She has no coaling depot in the Pacific outside her own land.

(3) She has no good victualling base, no dockyard, no arsenal, no resting-place in the Pacific outside her own land.

(4) New Caledonia could give her all these.

## NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

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(5) Noumea, the capital, has a splendid harbour that could hold half-a-dozen Japanese fleets with ease.

(6) That harbour is landlocked save for two narrow entrances.

(7) That harbour is hidden on the sea-side by mountainous islands. If a fleet of warships were to lie snuggled up towards the outer mountain wall of Noumea Harbour, it would be impossible to see a mast top from the ocean.

(8) New Caledonia has one of the finest coal-fields in the world.

(9) If Japan gets New Caledonia, she will have all she wants in the way of a coaling station, a naval depot, an arsenal, and all the facilities for building docks.

The obvious deduction is that Noumea in Japanese hands would be a standing menace not only to Australia and New Zealand, but also to British supremacy in the South Pacific. As previously remarked, Britain is too remote to perceive how pressing and real the danger is; but in an Imperial Council or Parliament with representatives from all the self-governing colonies the Australasian point of view would be clearly represented. Doubtless as a result serious negotiations would have been begun with France long ere this for the transference of the island to Great Britain, either by purchase or by exchange of territory. Only a few months ago it was reported that the English and French Foreign Offices had entered into negotiations for the exchange of part of Senegambia in West Africa for the relics of the French Empire in India, and the question of the transfer of New Caledonia was then discussed. Unfortunately, however, as the proposal was made a party question in the French Chamber, the negotiations fell through.

Still, the interest aroused by the nearer approach of the Japanese to our doors may prove a blessing in disguise. The recent naval estimates prove that England intends to maintain a fleet capable of resisting successfully any probable combination of European Powers. New Zealand and Australia have shown of late that they are becoming

## THE ROUND TABLE

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more alive to their national responsibilities; but we shall be failing in our duty to ourselves and to the Empire until we increase our naval subsidy to something approaching the rate—£1 per head—which the Mother Country is at present paying. The recent utterances of the New Zealand Press, and the growing conviction throughout the country that adequate naval defence is essential to our independence, seem to indicate that there would be little opposition to a proposal to make a substantial increase in our naval subsidy.

Sir Joseph Ward, before leaving to attend the Imperial Conference, in reply to a farewell address from the citizens of Dunedin touched upon the Eastern menace, and showed how essential naval defence is to our existence as an independent people. He said that there was an idea that the defence of New Zealand did not affect the working class. He made it clear that no class would be more affected, and asked what the workers would do, if within the next twenty years five or ten millions of people from the Far East were to land on our shores?

### NEW ZEALAND DEFENCES.

IN the meantime, the foundations have been laid of the new defence scheme which was described in the last New Zealand letter. A camp of instruction has been held during the last three months at Tauherenikau in the Wellington Province. To this camp were sent all the candidates for staff positions as commissioned or non-commissioned officers in the various military districts. At the conclusion of the encampment the most suitable of the candidates were appointed for a period of four years. To judge from the expressions of satisfaction which the selection has evoked, we have every reason for thinking that the appointments have been made on the merits of the candidates, and that they have been free from the pressure of political influence. This is encouraging, and will be an

## NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

incentive to capable young men to qualify for a military career. As the appointments have been made for four years only, the newly-created officers will realize the necessity of making themselves as efficient as possible to qualify for promotion at the end of the term. General Godley, in an interview, said that the camp had been of inestimable value: it had been attended by all the district commanding officers and had secured uniformity in training methods. The first batch of cadets has been selected for training at the Australian Military College. They start immediately upon their course of studies, at the conclusion of which they are under an obligation to serve at least ten years in the New Zealand Military forces. The Government has also accepted a tender for the erection of high-power wireless stations at Doubtless Bay in the North Island, and at the Bluff in the South Island. The completion of this work will give New Zealand wireless communication with Australia, the vessels of the Australian Squadron, and ultimately, it is hoped, with several Pacific Islands. This is another proof of the progressive policy our Government has adopted in military and naval matters.

### NEW ZEALAND & THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

**I**N the last New Zealand letter regret was expressed that time was not found to discuss the proposals which the Premier had submitted for the consideration of the Imperial Conference. It was urged that, unless our representatives were given an opportunity to debate matters of great imperial import, little could be done to educate parliament and people with regard to our duties and responsibilities as a unit of the British Empire. However, since the prorogation of Parliament, local politics have receded to the background, and imperial matters have been engaging the chief attention of the public and the press.

The importance which New Zealanders attach to the forthcoming Imperial Conference has been evidenced by

## THE ROUND TABLE

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the enthusiasm which characterised the various official functions held to give the citizens an opportunity of saying farewell to our two delegates, Sir Joseph Ward and the Hon. Dr Findlay. All parties, irrespective of political creed, assembled in the chief towns, from Invercargill to Auckland, to show their sense of the importance of the mission which has been entrusted to these two members of the cabinet. Sir Joseph Ward in his reply to the farewell address from the people of Auckland made it clear that the time for talking platitudes about Imperialism was past, and the time for serious concerted action was come. He believed

“ that the coming Conference would reaffirm, in a very practical way, the practical patriotism they wanted to see infused into portions of the Old Land and into portions of the oversea Dominions.”

He concluded by saying that,

“ It behoved the old Motherland to realize that what was right ten or fifteen years ago to enable the different parts of the Empire to maintain their position against any possible combination of other countries was not all right to-day. It required hearty co-operation of the people throughout the Empire to galvanize us into activity, and to bring about such co-operation and interchange of ideas among the statesmen of the old and the young parts of the nation as would be impossible to put into practice, unless one great aim animated every portion. The good of the Empire must be their watchword, and every Briton must be made to feel himself a brick in the edifice of the nation.”

In reply to the toast of his health at the banquet given in his honour by New Zealanders resident in Sydney, Sir Joseph Ward advocated an organic union between England and her dependencies. He complained that

“ the oversea Dominions have at present no voice—indeed no right to be heard—in connexion with

## NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

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foreign policies, vital questions of international law, foreign treaties other than commercial, nor the crowning question of peace and war. In respect of all important matters, the citizens of the oversea Dominions are disfranchised, and no system can be adopted, which while increasing contributions from the oversea Dominions for Empire defence, still refuses these growing young nations a voice in these vital questions. To continue our present undefined policy violates the first principle of our constitutional system—that there should be no taxation without representation.”

He said that under present conditions the foreign and the internal policy of the British Parliament often materially embarrass each other; that the questions upon which active political thought was engaged were preferential trade, Home Rule for Ireland, the veto, licensing questions, the suffragette movement, housing and labour problems; that the most important question of all—the preservation and protection of the great scattered Empire—was either subordinated to others or else became virtually a political shuttlecock, although it was the one topic that should be kept completely removed from party considerations, and that should stand out as the question of paramount importance, being as it was the one question in which all parties in the State were vitally concerned. The remedy he proposed was to grant Home Rule to England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and transfer the whole business of foreign policy and defence to an Imperial Parliament, consisting of a House of Representatives elected on a population basis, and a Senate in which each unit of the Empire would have the same number of representatives.

### MAIL SERVICES.

ONE question which will come before the Imperial Conference and which has been engaging the attention of the public is that of a quicker mail service between New Zealand and England. Since the discontinuance of the mail service

## THE ROUND TABLE

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by Spreckel's boats to San Francisco, our chief business men and our Chambers of Commerce have been systematically working for a more up-to-date postal communication with America and England. A glance at the only available service up to the present shows the great disadvantage under which New Zealand has been labouring. The mail takes via Suez 34 to 36 days, and by connexion with the Australia-Vancouver service at Suva 32 days for outward mails. For inward mails, which are brought to Auckland from Suva via Sydney or Brisbane, the time occupied is 38 to 40 days. Last year the Government entered into a contract with the Union Steam Ship Company for a service between New Zealand and 'Frisco; but as only old and obsolete vessels were available the time taken is 32 to 34 days to 'Frisco: thus, the Dominion would be in no better position as regards mail services. In the interval, however, Sir Joseph Ward has been in communication with the Canadian Government. As a result of his repeated representations it was decided that, when the time came to consider the renewal of the Vancouver contract, efforts should be made to secure a port of call in New Zealand, and when tenders were called by the Government of Canada, returnable on November 1, 1910, it was stipulated that the tenderers should give prices for alternative routes, (a) via Brisbane to Sydney, (b) via Auckland to Sydney, with possible extension to Melbourne. After considering the tenders, the Canadian Government decided to accept that of the Union Steam Ship Company for the service via Auckland to Sydney. The contract was signed for five years, and it was stipulated that the steamers employed should be able to maintain a speed of 15 knots at sea and deliver mails between Auckland and Vancouver within 19 days. This proposal was placed before the Government of the Commonwealth. The Prime Minister, Mr Fisher, however, intimated that, since New Zealand enjoyed more favourable tariff arrangements with Canada, he could not see his way to subsidize a line via Auckland to the exclusion of Bris-



## NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

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bane and Melbourne. He also informed Sir James Mills, the Managing Director of the United Steam Ship Company that he intended to discuss the question of a reciprocal tariff between Canada and Australia at the forthcoming Imperial Conference. Even supposing that a satisfactory treaty were arranged, it would have to be ratified by the parliaments of the two countries concerned. This would postpone indefinitely the final settlement of the mail services, and would leave the whole question in a state of great uncertainty. Under these circumstances Canada closed with the offer of the United Steam Ship Company for a four-weekly service between Auckland and Vancouver via Suva and Honolulu, but reserved the right to require the contractor to proceed to Sydney or Melbourne, or to both ports. This reservation still leaves Australia the opportunity of co-operating with New Zealand and Canada to secure the most up-to-date service between these three important units of the Empire. Defeated in the negotiations about the Vancouver service, Mr Fisher was inclined to disparage the prospects of trade with Canada, and hinted that it would be more to Australia's advantage to subsidize a service between Brisbane or Sydney and San Francisco.

From an Imperial standpoint such an attitude is much to be regretted. In the first place, such a service would cost Australia about £100,000, whereas her subsidy to the Vancouver service was £26,000. In the second place co-operation on the part of the three countries would be attended by many advantages. Larger and faster boats would be built for the service. There would probably be an increased tourist traffic between the Dominions, while the quicker postal communication would tend to promote trade and commerce. The new service is practically an all-red route, and with the great prospects which it opens up there is every probability that it will continue to be a great commercial link between Great Britain, Canada, and Australasia. The history of the negotiations also emphasizes the necessity for some Imperial council in which representa-

## THE ROUND TABLE

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tives of the various Dominions might discuss matters of mutual interest. To quote Mr Fisher's words,

"Australia could not agree to the proposal to include Auckland as a port of call because it meant subsidizing another country."

It is to be hoped that Australia will yet see her way to subsidize the service; but the incident merely serves to show how great is the possibility of friction and misunderstanding, when one Dominion is prepared to sacrifice its own interests and suffer loss rather than join in a scheme which might result in a greater advantage to a sister Dominion, while benefiting the Empire as a whole. The *Auckland Star* reflects the impression which Mr Fisher's attitude has left in the minds of New Zealanders when it says:

"New Zealand may draw from the recent negotiations a moral that we have often pointed before—the necessity for maintaining our political and commercial independence. The risks we would have run by accepting Australia's offer and becoming a member of the Commonwealth have never been better exemplified; and we may well congratulate ourselves that at the most critical moment of our history we decided to stand outside the borders of Federation."

Whatever little feeling the negotiations about the Vancouver Mail may have left in the minds of New Zealanders and Australians was completely removed by the visit to Sydney of Sir Joseph Ward and the Hon. Dr Findlay on their way to the Imperial Conference. The general tenor of the speeches at the various functions they attended was that New Zealand and Australia should co-operate as far as possible in all matters that are likely to prove to the mutual advantage of the two Dominions. Indeed, the Australian Postmaster-General went so far as to suggest that there should be absolute free-trade between the two

## NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

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countries, although when we recollect that during the drought years the Australian farmers strenuously opposed the suggestion that New Zealand produce should be admitted free of duty, we have little reason to expect that the Postmaster-General's idea would find much favour with the people of Australia. The best we can hope for is that some "sensible reciprocal agreement between Australia and New Zealand" as advocated by Sir Joseph Ward, will be seriously considered by the parliaments of both countries. Dr Findlay at the same time dwelt upon the advantages that would result to Australia and New Zealand from the establishment of a two-days' steamship service across the Tasman Sea. Another obstacle to the development of trade between the two countries is the excessive cable rate of fourpence-halfpenny per word. Could the two countries agree to reduce this rate and at the same time establish reciprocity and quicker steamship services, there is little doubt that there would be an unprecedented increase in the commercial and social intercourse between New Zealand and Australia, and that there would be less likelihood of misunderstanding in negotiations on matters of mutual interest.

As the vessels, the "Makura," the "Marama," and the "Zealandia," which will be employed on the Vancouver service are all provided with cool storage, there is every prospect of a large increase in our butter and frozen meat exports to Canada. In 1909 our exports to Canada were worth £180,975, but among these there were only 50 cwt. of butter valued at £257. New Zealand producers are anticipating that under the new arrangements there will be a considerable increase in the export of butter and frozen meat to Canada, and seem to doubt whether the cold storage available on the mail steamers will be sufficient for the demands of the trade. One merchant, who represents a number of Canadian firms in New Zealand, is of opinion that the prospects of trade between the two countries are sufficiently great to justify the inauguration of a regular

## THE ROUND TABLE

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cargo service with cold storage. He maintains that in 1909 Canada's importation of lines in which New Zealand could compete amounted to 9,671,737 dollars, to which amount New Zealand contributed only 313,194 dollars, or about  $3\frac{1}{3}$  per cent.

### CANADA-UNITED STATES RECIPROCITY.

THE New Zealand press has always taken a great interest in all matters of Imperial concern but our improved commercial relations with Canada may account for the great prominence our daily papers have given to the negotiations for the preferential treaty between the Dominion and the United States of America. While the press ridicules the idea that Canada will be absorbed by the United States of America, and views with regret the suggestion that the new tariff arrangements may weaken the ties with the mother country, it recognizes that Canada is the best judge of what is most likely to advance her own interests. To take a typical comment: the *New Zealand Herald*, which has consistently advocated preferential trade within the Empire, says,

"We shall, of course, deeply deplore the fact, if the reciprocal agreement should weaken the Imperial sentiment in Canada and retard the realization of a pan-Britannic fiscal union. Britain has, however, practically declared that she does not want preferential tariff agreements, but would like more Dreadnoughts. The colossal Dominion, with her vast potentialities, cannot allow her development to be choked because British statesmen are crass and inert. She will do well for herself if she establishes closer, more friendly and more profitable relations with her great neighbour, separated from her by a mere line on the map; and she may be trusted to preserve her separate existence and to pursue her own glorious destiny."

Another daily paper, the *Auckland Star*, fears that

## NEW ZEALAND AFFAIRS

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"The admission of our American rivals into the Canadian markets on better terms than they now enjoy, will inevitably react against England. But far more important than any temporary loss of trade is the assertion of the principle that the time has come for England's colonies to consult their own interests by making the best terms they can for themselves in foreign markets. England cannot complain, whatever be the consequences; for, as we have been told so often, the door of England's markets has been 'banged, bolted, and barred,' against the colonial offer of preferential trade. But, believing firmly that the commercial future of England and her Imperial destiny are involved in the acceptance or rejection of the Reciprocity programme, we can only deplore the establishment of a precedent that in our opinion cannot be followed by the colonies without seriously endangering the prosperity and unity of the Empire."

### THE DECLARATION OF LONDON.

**A**NOTHER topic which has been kept prominently before the public by articles in the press is the Declaration of London. The arguments used have not differed from those put forward at Home; but, though the controversy has been conducted with more vigour in some cases than knowledge, it has served to emphasize the fact that the Dominions are being brought daily into more intimate relation with foreign affairs, and that some provision should be made to ensure that their special interests will be thoroughly considered whenever any important step is being taken. Our interest in the carriage of food supplies, and the question of contraband generally, is a very real one, and with the best intentions in the world those in authority in England might quite conceivably fail to notice how an international arrangement might affect us.

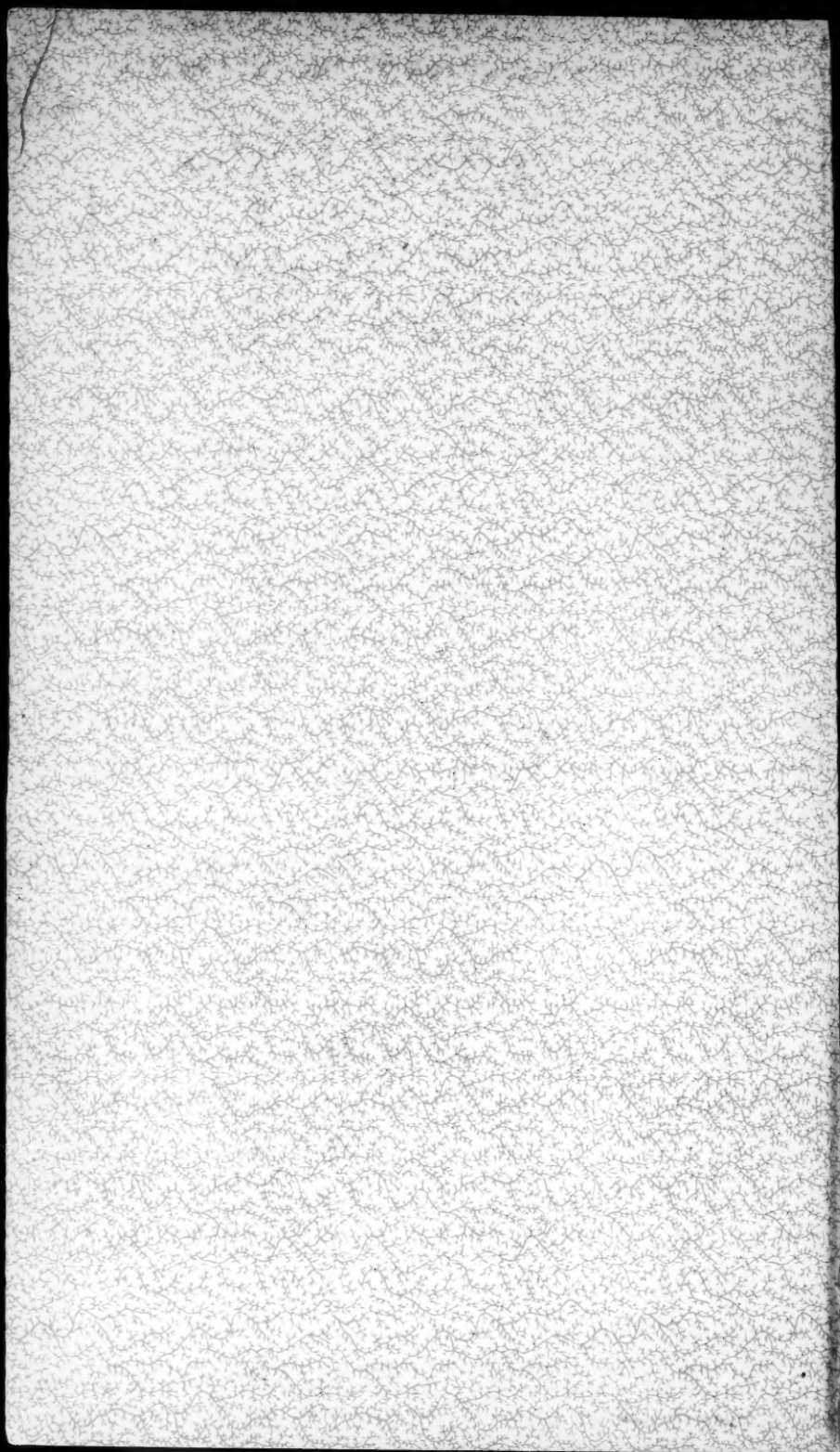
New Zealand, May, 1911.

# INDEX TO VOLUME

1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28
29	29	29	29
30	30	30	30
31	31	31	31
32	32	32	32
33	33	33	33
34	34	34	34
35	35	35	35
36	36	36	36
37	37	37	37
38	38	38	38
39	39	39	39
40	40	40	40
41	41	41	41
42	42	42	42
43	43	43	43
44	44	44	44
45	45	45	45
46	46	46	46
47	47	47	47
48	48	48	48
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C51

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